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# VINZENZ PRIESSNITZ:

OR, THE

WONDERFUL POWER OF WATER

IN

HEALING THE DISEASES

OF THE

**HUMAN BODY.**

BY

DR. CHR. CHARLES SCHIEFERDECKER.

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So haben wir mit hœllischen Latwergen  
In diesen Thælern, diesen Bergen  
Weit schlimmer als die Pest getobt.  
Ich habe selbst das Gift an Tausende gegeben,  
Sie welkten hin ;—ich muss erleben,  
Dass man die frechen Mærder lobt.

*Dr. Faust.*

Thus did we rage with hellish drugs and pills  
All o'er these happy valleys—o'er these hills,  
Till we Death's standard had sublimely raised.  
To hundreds I dispensed the deadly poison's doses,  
I saw them wither like decaying roses, †  
And live to see the murd'rous leeches praised.

*Goethe's Faust.*





## PREFACE.

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PERMIT me to offer something new to the citizens of the country I have chosen as my “fatherland.” I owe them such an offering—they received me kindly, and that kindness I can only repay by labouring for their benefit. May this small gift of gratitude prove to them a lasting blessing, by leading them to the useful investigation of a subject of the highest importance—the preservation of health, and the most simple and natural means of restoring it, by that element which a bountiful Providence has so widely diffused, *pure and cold water*.

The author is unaccustomed to the use of the English language, and his desire of disseminating the knowledge of this important discovery could alone overcome the diffidence with which he has made the attempt. But if truth be advanced, knowledge diffused, and the sufferings of any portion of the human family alleviated

by it, he trusts that an apology will found for the improprieties of his language and the roughness of his sentences.

Instead of lavishing encomiums or deprecating censure upon his little book, or on the practice of which it gives an account, he leaves it to speak for itself, but will here subjoin a few facts connected with the progress of the science in England. The first is an extract from the "London Sunday News" of March 1840, slightly abridged.

"Lord Monelist, aged about 58, suffered under an incurable disease, the universal gout. He was given up by the most celebrated physicians, and went from England to the therapeutic Institute at Græfenberg, in Germany, into which, on his arrival, he had to be carried on leather belts, being alike unable to stand or walk. After a stay of sixteen months and five days, he left Græfenberg perfectly restored, and now lives in London healthful and happy. Actuated by gratitude, he built an institute for healing by cold water near his villa, about three miles from London, to which twenty-four sick persons are gratuitously admitted. In the meadow before the bath-

ing-house, there is a beautiful temple, resting on eight columns, surrounded by the attributes of the water-god, Neptune. A naiad, placed on a rock-like pedestal, pours fresh water out of an urn into a large basin. Next to her stands Priessnitz, the great master, in Germany, of the art of healing by water, in his everyday dress, pointing with his right hand to the naiad. Thousands from London visit this temple and the surrounding country out of curiosity, but as soon as the temple is full, the water begins to fall out of a projecting outlet in the form of a cataract, upon the iron railing that encircles it, cutting off all egress. A voice emanating from the pedestal then announces, that the spectators will only be permitted to leave the temple with a dry skin when they have given a small contribution to the poor of the Institute. Most of them do it willingly and even cheerfully. Such as would refuse are either induced to give by the example of the liberal, or forced to spring through a three-fold wall of water, amid the laughter of the spectators within and without. They however gain

gratuitously a fundamental notion of the main process of the healing art by water."

The next extract is from an article in the "Boston Transcript," the writer of which, while he says that he cannot refrain from presenting his readers with an abstract of an address delivered by Capt. Claridge, at Dover, England, yet enters his caveat lest any one should suppose him "a believer in the chilly system." This is only what may be anticipated, for the scenes witnessed and described by Capt. Claridge are so unlike anything which the gentleman can have witnessed, that it is difficult to believe.

"The Captain imagines," he says, "that in this new system he has discovered the true elixir of life; for he says that he can see no good reason why man should not live to two hundred years of age; he brings forward what he terms evidence in favour of longevity, through the cold water medium; and he declares that it is impossible for any man to die of any acute disease, while the patient has sufficient strength left to allow of water producing its reaction in him.

"Captain Claridge himself states that he was

suffering severely from rheumatism, headache, and weakness of the eyes, for which he had consulted many physicians, and tried various remedies, without effect ; when he was advised to try the effect of this method. For this purpose he proceeded, with his family, to Græfenberg, the residence of Mr. Priessnitz.

“ The course prescribed by Mr. Priessnitz, for Captain Claridge, was the following :—At about four o’clock in the morning, his servant brought a large, coarse blanket, in which he was enveloped, and which was tightly fastened round his neck, and at his feet ; then, as many blankets as he could conveniently bear were heaped upon him, and on these a bed, so as effectually to exclude the external air ; in this state he remained till six o’clock. In about an hour, perspiration took place, when the doors and windows were opened, and he was instructed to drink about a pint of cold water, by means of a pipe. At six o’clock the coverings were removed, and he had his face, chest, and shins washed with cold water, to prevent his taking cold. He then descended to the bath, in a pair of straw shoes.

In the bath he remained three minutes dressed, with all the windows open, and walked, drinking cold water at various places, (to the amount of about eight glasses,) until he arrived at the establishment to breakfast, which was composed of milk, butter, and brown bread, with wild strawberries, for five months in the year. Then he descended the mountain by another path, and on his way took a *douche* bath, in which the stream flowing from the mountain is collected in a pipe. This is suffered to flow first on one part of the body, then on another, and lastly on the part affected. From this he proceeded home, took a *sitz* bath—a tub with about six or nine inches of water, in which he sat for fifteen minutes; he then took a foot-bath for the same length of time, the servant rubbing his feet while they were in the water. For the weakness of his sight, he lay on the floor, upon his back, and placed the back of his head in a basin of water, for five minutes. He dined at one o'clock; at three repeated the same process, and walked until nine. For supper, he ate the same as at breakfast.

“His daughter, who was supposed to be consumptive, but who Mr. Priessnitz pronounced had merely outgrown her strength—being, as he expressed it, too tall for her breadth, underwent a similar process, except that to produce perspiration, she was enveloped in a wet sheet, instead of a blanket, and at night she wore a wet cloth upon her chest, and another around her body. In less than three months she was perfectly recovered.

“According to the statement of Captain Claridge, people ‘never say die,’ at Græfenberg; or they never de cease, as he expresses it, ‘from any acute disorder.’ Cold water, and a spare diet, is the prescription for longevity; and, from all accounts, the sovereign panacea ‘for all the ills which flesh is heir to.’

“Plain people become beauties by the observance of this rule; and the lame are enabled by it to ‘rise and walk.’ ‘One young lady,’ says the captain, ‘who went to Græfenberg with scrofula in her face and neck, so bad as to render her quite an object; in nine months she was

so completely recovered as to be considered the beauty of the room."

"Another case was that of an officer, who, in consequence of a wound, had his leg so withered that it was not thicker than his wrist. He shortly had the limb perfectly restored.

"The establishment of Mr. Priessnitz is a very irregular structure, having been built at different periods; but it has one noble room, which is used for meals and assemblies. At the public table where they sat down, about three hundred persons, the captain took occasion to remark the extraordinary flow of spirits which seemed to pervade the company; so different, he says, from what any one would expect in invalids.

"There are said to be a hundred establishments on the same plan now in Germany; and the number of patients who have consulted Mr. Priessnitz, from the commencement of his institution in 1829, to 1841, is upwards of seven thousand."



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# VINZENZ PRIESSNITZ:

OR,

THE WONDERFUL POWER OF WATER.

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## CHAPTER I.

OF VINCENT PRIESSNITZ.

VINCENT or VINZENZ PRIESSNITZ, though justly numbered among the most distinguished men this century has produced, is the son of a poor peasant who lived among the Sudites or Giants' mountains, in Austrian Silesia. Though excluded from the advantages of a good education, he enjoyed the gift of a rich talent, engrafted into his mind by the Creator, which led him involuntarily to the observation of Nature. Whilst he was engaged in attending the cattle of his father, according to the prevailing custom, (for the method of protecting the fields by separate fences is not common in Germany), he

made use of the many opportunities which his situation offered, to observe the instincts of his flock, and the wild animals that came near him. He was particularly attracted by the circumstance of a beautiful stag coming every morning to a spring near his pasture-ground, and, after quenching its thirst by long draughts from the limpid fountain, bathing its supple limbs in the cool water that surrounded the spring. Once, after having waited for his shy friend several days, he saw the animal limping, and evidently in a state of suffering, approach the spring and drink more plentifully and remain longer in the water than ever he had observed it formerly. This the stag repeated for several successive days, until the marks of illness had entirely disappeared, and it had regained its former suppleness and vigour.

This circumstance excited reflexion in the mind of the youthful philosopher, and induced him to try, by way of experiment in some of his own complaints, whether this method which had succeeded so well in the case just mentioned, was applicable to the cure of human

disease. And once, even when he was afflicted with a violent pleurisy, connected with a dangerous fracture of some of his ribs, he rejected all medical stuffs, applied only water in this way, and in short time got well.

Priessnitz felt it now to be his duty to offer this discovery to those of his poor neighbours who were suffering under inveterate disease, and his benevolent efforts were crowned with wonderful success. His name was soon hailed, notwithstanding the opposition of the learned world, and especially of the graduated physicians, as that of a benefactor of mankind, all over Germany; and in France, Russia, and England, his system found many advocates. He turned his farm into a formal *Hydratic Institute*; and it is now constantly beleaguered by thousands of suffering applicants, anxiously longing for the dismissal of a patient, that they might immediately fill his place; and the clear income of the institute amounts to upwards of fifty thousand dollars annually.

Chronologically, Priessnitz is not the first that has cured by water; but assuredly he holds this

rank by the power of his talents, the immensity of his success, and the reputation and wealth derived from his practice. He was born in Germany in the right time. The skeptical spirit, in relation to the rotten dogmas of the old medical systems, had risen from a long slumber, and the conviction was gaining ground that by returning to the laws of Nature alone our ills could be remedied. Not unlike our Luther,—who by clearing our holy religion from the abuses by which a selfish clergy had vitiated it, restored its means of nourishing and healing our souls—stands Vincent Priessnitz, invincibly vindicating the rights of Nature, and offering to his fellow-men the invaluable treasure of a strong and healthful body. Fifty years earlier the genius of Priessnitz would have met with persecution and condemnation; for he would, like Luther's precursor, John Huss, have been misunderstood, and as deeply depreciated as he is now highly valued. "A genius misunderstood, in the midst of sneering blockheads, is the highest irony of human fate, and the darkest picture of human misery."



## CHAPTER II.

## OF ALLOPATHY.

"Stick to my trade," said dying butcher John,—  
As doctor acts, so acts the doctor's son.

THE old medical art, which had descended to us by inheritance, has lost much of its authority since one doctor began to call another a "murderer;" much since, during the period of the Cholera Asiatica, this designation came in vogue; and still more from the epoch of Hahnemann's rising as the founder of his homœopathic system. Hahnemann and his followers stigmatized the allopathists as "*homicides*," whilst the latter recriminated upon them as "*impostors and dealers in poison*." Each of the parties awarded to the other the prize of charlatanry. Which of them may be in the right let others decide.—I, for my part, possessing the blessed gift of belief, cannot help believing that both of them are alike in the right.

Some criticisms of the most distinguished allopathists of Europe and America, upon their own science, may here find a place; among them there is not one from any practitioner of the homœopathic school:

*Dr. Helmont*, (in Thomas. Dissert. de jur. circ. Pharmacop. civit. C. III. § 6): “A murderous devil has taken possession of the professional chair of the medical sciences, for who but a devil is capable of recommending venesection to the physician as an unavoidable mean of curing.”

*Dr. Boerhave*: “If the benefits, which by half a dozen true physicians have been conferred on the inhabitants of the earth, since the existence of the science, are compared with the ills caused by the immense host of doctors amongst the family of man: the thought will undoubtedly arise, that it would have proved infinitely more beneficial if the world had remained without physicians.”

*Dr. Girtanner*, (Ausfuehrl. Darstell. des Brown-schen Systems der prakt. Heilkunde, vol. ii. page 600): *In the dense Egyptian darkness*

*wherein the physicians go groping along, not even the least ray of light affords to them any assistance in guiding their steps.—Two physicians meeting at the bed of a patient are not seldom in the situation of two Roman augurs, they finding it difficult, when looking in each other's face, to stifle their laughter.”*

*Dr. A. F. Hecker*, (Theorien, Systeme und Heilmethoden der Aerzte, 4to edition, 1819. page 5):—“Yea, there is no lack of instances, where physicians denounced methods of healing and single medicines as ‘murderous,’ the salubriousness of which they some years before were unable to praise sufficiently.”

*Dr. von Wedekind*, (In Henke's Zeitschrift fuer die Staats - Arzneikunde, Jahrg. 7. Heft i., pag. 5): “Is not the best physician he, who least prescribes, and not the indefatigable loafer and lozenge-monger?”

*Dr. Benjamin Rusk*, (Medical Inquiries, in the Sammlung auserlesener medicinischer Abhandlungen, vol. iv. p. 2. page 297): “We have not only augmented the number of

diseases, but have also rendered them more fatal."

*Dr. Pfeufer*, (Medicin. Conversationsblatt. 1831. No. 45): "We are still hovering in deep darkness as to what way Nature tends in chronical diseases, by opening and performing the process of healing."

*Dr. Choulant*, (Neue Zeitschr. fuer Natur- und Heilkunde vol. i. H. 2, pag. 313): "The theory of practical physic may indeed be considered as the true image of the Babylonian confusion of languages.—We have built on the sand of opinions, and the structure reels like the reed, agitated by the wind . . . We form diagnoses of diseases as they could be, not as they are."

*Heidelberger klinische Annalen*, vol. v. H. 3: "There are indeed far more patients killed by physicians than saved."

*Dr. Kieser*, (System der Medizin, vol. i. Preface, page x): "Each patient ought to be warned against doctors as against the most dangerous poison."

*Dr. Scherf*: "The apothecaries' shops are, in

respect to the careless and unwary, but state hypocritical stores of death, and corruptors of health; in lieu of conservatories of life and means for protecting it."

*Dr. Nolte* : "I know very well, that perhaps seven-tenths of the human family have perished, not by diseases but by untimely and too copious medicine."

*Dr. Hertz*, (Rust's Magazin fuer die gesammte Heilkunde, vol. xxxii. H. 2. page 313): "A truly piratical profession is carried on, and all the doing, writing, and speculating, has for its object nothing but the emptying of those purses of which hold can be taken."

*Dr. Most*, (Encyklopadie der gesammt. med. und chirurg. Praxis, vol. ii. page 740): "It is, alas, but too true, that many physicians verify the saying: *The medicine is worse than the disease.*"

*Ibidem* : "Of the nature and proximate cause of fevers we know but little; the opinions respecting them are astonishingly various and ambiguous. *The less they were understood they more they were criticized.* Many de-

finitions, originating with otherwise celebrated physicians, are nothing but empty words, by which the subject is by no means elucidated."

*Medico-chirurgical Review*, No. 6, Octob. 1825, page 387: "Tetanus is *among the very many diseases* of which we are nearly ignorant, both as regards the pathology and treatment."

Views congenial to those expressed by the above named honourable men are entertained by many more respectable physicians; but most of them feel too great an aversion to the horror of starvation, to which uprightness might expose them, to pay to truth its due honour. Each of my readers may, however, from these proofs, form his own judgment, and act accordingly.

My own opinion of Allopathy is the following

The allopathic school has little or no efficacy in chronic diseases, such as rheumatisms, gout, &c. &c. This school promises only alleviation. What the nature of this alleviation is, I shall endeavour to show in the sequel. The main efficiency of the allopathists is restricted to

the acute, and principally the inflammatory diseases, and also to cases of infectious ulcers. In the former cases, their cure consists in substituting in lieu of the disease, a state of chronical debility or enervation of the whole organism. This effect is produced by them, partly by medicines, and partly by detraction of blood in various modes.

The process may be thus explained:—In each attack of the acute kind, the still vigorous organism is labouring, by a law of nature, to free itself from some destructive agent that has intruded into it. Having become sensible of its inability to defend itself against detrimental aggression, in the natural way, it heightens, or graduates by a fever or an inflammation, its power and activity to an uncommon degree. This graduation is not “*a disease*,” as we are accustomed to call it, but “*a tendency to health*,” which, however, may cause death instead of restoration, if, instead of Water,—to which the instinct of such a patient commonly inclines in the most decided manner,—a diet contrary to nature is imposed upon the sufferer, and

medicines or blood-letting is resorted to, for which nature did not call.

As soon as the excitement of the system, by medicines or blood-letting, is counteracted, the *risible* fury of the disease abates: the symptoms,—which are indeed but the true signs of nature operating wholesomely,—disappear, and either death ensues, in consequence of debility, or, from the same cause, the organism desists from operating for its own recovery. Thus the system is reduced to the miserable condition of harbouring the sickening agents in its interior, which by fever and inflammation it was about ejecting. The chronical languor and enervation [reduction of the power] of the organism is now completed. Not only are the original sickening agents now firmly stationed in the interior, causing latent, symptomless debility, that is, the secret decline of vitality without external signs; but this state has been still more aggravated by the additional poisoning influence of the medicines administered to the patient.

This is called "*healing*" by the allopathists,



but it is indeed "*destroying*," it is "*slowly murdering*."

The great error of this school may be traced to their false notions of the nature and cause of diseases; and in supposing fever and inflammation to be diseases, instead of what they really are—symptoms or means essentially necessary in every real cure. The *Hydratic school* believes them to be the agents by which foetid sweats, critical evacuations, cutaneous eruptions, and ulcers are produced, and which will remove the injurious materials from the system. There is no cure possible without those sensibly perceptible removals of the sickening cause; and when performed by water-physicians will *always* be observed in every disease. This, in addition to the evidence it affords of the reality of the cure, furnishes at the same time a proof that the cause of all maladies are really material substances, of which afterwards. If such secretions at the close of an acute disease are missed, it proves that the body is not cured, but delivered to chronic languor.

Such is the nature of the allopathic method

of healing acute diseases ; for to heal, according to the old system, was “*to cure by producing such symptoms as are opposed to those of the existing disease.*” This is the mighty error ! But another inconsistency is added to this primary one, viz. : Allopathy uses long ago homœopathic means, such, for instance, as are recommended in alternating fevers, in venereal maladies, &c. Indeed all the remedies which Allopathy uses to call “*specific ones,*” and of whose efficacy she prides herself most, are of a purely homœopathic character, that is : “they produce symptoms similar to those of the treated disease.”

Yet, alas ! even these remedies were pernicious in the hands of allopathists, since they made too free and copious a use of them. This has probably led Hahnemann to its opposite extreme, which is ridiculous rather than dangerous. Against venereal complaints, psora (itch), Allopathy has her specific means ; but what does she effect by them ?—the old mother of sorrows ? Either she forces back into the body the cause of sickness, in quite a quacklike manner, by

external plaistering, or she produces the same effect more learnedly, by ordering the swallowing of large doses of medicinal poison to keep the poison of the disease fettered to the interior of the system. Thus rendering the body incapable of producing the external symptom, by depriving it of its power of throwing out through the skin the noxious matter by which the disease was caused. This effect will indeed never be perfectly obtained in diseases of this kind, so as to arrive at the full recovery by its own exertions; but as long as it exerts itself to that end, it is susceptible of being healed, but when the external symptoms have entirely disappeared, the cure has become impossible, and it requires often a great deal of time and labour, to succeed so far, with a system abused in such a manner, as to enable it to produce the symptom again.

Physicians of weak intellectual powers take it for a sure sign of a cure of ulcers, when the symptom, in consequence of mere doses internally taken, disappears. This is an illusion: if the doses are internally applied in too large quantities and too frequently, they will operate in a

paralysing and destructive manner, depriving the body of its power even of sustaining the symptom, far less of curing itself. Then the internal, yellowish sulphuric, or grayish mercurial reduction of the vital power is forever established in the miserable body, like a standard of Death in a decayed fortress. Neither Allopathy nor Homœopathy will afford a cure; only Hydriatic practice will, *can*, effect the astonishing recovery.

Not always will the allopathic treatment exhibit such horrible consequences as these now delineated; not indeed where the abused organism possesses the self-healing power in an uncommon degree; neither where the physician, imbued with a correct knowledge of his dangerous art, renders his doses harmless, leaving the healing process mostly to the operation of nature. I have known a doctor of that kind, whose services were much called for and well rewarded, and who yet resorted to medicines, but only when he was convinced of their harmlessness. This may be objected to, but it is certainly better than to receive payment for positively assisting

Death in his work of destruction. The man wanted to live and to let live. Another class of doctors are poisoning in their innocence. A third exist,—consisting of a few only,—who know what they are doing; when they, according to the rules of their profession, treat a patient labouring under an acute disease, they turn their wages into life-rents; they work knowingly, to the end that the patient should hold his life as a fief, until his death. But, happily, this class is small in number, and its members are met with as rarely as other things of the truly horrible.

One word more must be added about the efficacy of Allopathy in chronic diseases.

As soon as chronic complaints, mostly in the fall and spring, assume the acute and alarming character, the allopathic physicians again enter into the field, viz. in their usual manner of alleviating pains, that is, by striving to lull into sleep the renewed endeavours of nature to produce recovery, or by fettering the limbs of the rebel. These pains originate in the stirring of nature out of a state of torpid, lamentable,

resignation into a state of insurrection against the tyrannising malady. Such acute attacks in chronic diseases would, without the interference of physicians, if they had not cured, at least have been beneficial, by having ejected something of the sickening matter from the system. This alleviating process of the doctors renders, therefore, the malady more tenacious.

## CHAPTER III.

## OF HOMŒOPATHY.

FATHER Hahnemann,—for as the father of the alone true science of healing he proclaims himself loudly enough—and his delicate little child, Homœopathy, promise (quite antithetically to Allopathy) their best help in chronic diseases, whilst they, in healing of acute attacks, are yet borrowing several articles out of the laboratory of their bitterest enemy, Allopathy.

The fundamental principle of Homœopathy: “*Similia similibus curare*,” that is, “*to cure the like by the like*,” does indeed much honour to its discoverer, and existed centuries ago: but that the decillionth atoms of Hahnemann could have any efficacy, is alike incredible as laughable. Only a really blind and superstitious belief can place confidence in a decillionth part of a drop, since even the ocean contains not a decillion of drops.

It would be too tedious to explain here the

whole of this paradoxical doctrine. This Homœopathy despises all anatomical, ætiological, physiological knowledge; she exacts nothing but an anxious inquiry after symptoms, in order to find by their guidance those substances which are producing upon the healthful the like symptoms. The "*Vis naturæ conservatrix et medicatrix*" is declared to do nothing at all in diseases, the ridiculously small doses, on the contrary, to do all in all. Hahnemann pretended to be a physician, without possessing physiological knowledge, and overlooked, therefore, by taking the shell for the kernel, the empty formula for the spirit, without even knowing it, *that the same organic phenomena, respecting the form, can have a diametrically opposite fundamental character*; and that, on the reverse, organic phenomena of apparently quite different forms can originate from the same cause. Examples are needless, a glance upon the cases of ophthalmia angina, diarrhœas, &c. will suffice. Homœopathy is merely a symptomatic method of healing, and hers is, therefore, the fate of all such; it may perhaps remove this and that



symptom, the disease itself remains unbroken. A most sad, yea, indeed, a dreadful character can be exhibited by this one-sightedness, caused by the lamentable limitation of homœopathic views, when life itself is at stake. That which in lingering diseases, which are not threatening a fatal turn, may be allowable treatment, will then turn into a crime!

Yet Homœopathy does not kill directly, though nobody can reasonably expect efficacy from a decillionth atom.—The harmlessness of such lilliputian doses somewhat palliates the impropriety of raising barbers, ignorant even of the art of reading and writing, in the space of about four weeks, to doctors of Homœopathy; an indiscretion of which proofs are at hand. Whoever may yet desire to be cured dynamically, may at least certainly save his gold. He will find his full satisfaction by applying to any old woman imbued with the noble science of soothsaying and blowing at the painful parts and praying over them. This can be obtained for a few cents, and will have fully as great an effect as any soothing exorcism, procured from Hahne-

mann's decillionth atoms, and somewhat overweight by the dynamic gold.

A wit of our acquaintance lately heard of an improvement of Hahnemann's, of immense importance. It consists in a collection of fleas, to be resorted to in cases of the utmost emergency, as in the glowing sirocco of burning fevers, when, all other means failing, the homœopathist will apply one of these little animals out of the phial in which it is kept, after having shaken the whole assembly and rendered them furious, or elevated to the becoming dignity. The effect is said to be astonishing.

We ought indeed to be thankful for the kindness of Homœopathy in furnishing us from time to time with something laughable.

Though we are now agreed, that Homœopathy, on account of its childlike harmlessness, is preferable to Allopathy in many points of view; we must yet place it far below the hydropatric practice in consequence of the following reasons:

*Firstly*, Homœopathy, — in common with Allopathy, — has this very important defect, that

its efficacy is at one and the same time limited upon single functions, organs, and parts of the whole organism, which causes, in both methods of cures, the frequency of relapses. Whilst the suffering function was about being cured, the whole or some single parts of it remained in its former invalid state, and therefrom originated a disproportion in the harmony, the restoration of which, attempted by nature, causes a sinking of that same function below zero, which had been raised unnaturally by art, and thus a relapse is prepared.

*Secondly,* It is all-important with the homoeopathic mode of curing, that the right remedy for each symptom should be chosen, for which, of course, a skilful and thoroughly sensible man is requisite, and even such a one will and must often mistake and do harm, for if the homoeopathic can do good, it can also do harm, because it is medicine? The hydropathic practitioner can indeed also err in the application, but very rarely, hardly ever, and then his mistake can scarcely in any case do harm.

*Thirdly,* Homoeopathy indeed excites the

organism to heal, in consequence of its correct fundamental principle, provided the means are judiciously chosen, (and that they possess any efficacy at all); but it fails to support the system during the process of healing, and this is done by the hydriatric practice alone.

*Fourthly*, Homoeopathy has no power at all over the cutaneous system, whilst the skin is, indeed, by far the most important organ in every cure, over which organ the hydriatric practice exercises the utmost control.

In the following chapters, what has been said here will be corroborated.

## CHAPTER IV.

## SKETCHES OF CURES.

1. *Chronic disease of the liver, in consequence of medical treatment of Hepatitis.*

AN unmarried lady, of a tender frame, and of about 50 years of age, applied to the hydriatric method of curing for an old and heavy liver-complaint. The disorder had its commencement in an inflammation of the liver, treated by an allopathist mostly with mercury. Priessnitz ordered her into the cold water sweating-baths and below the fall- or douche- (*Sturz-*) bath. After a long space of time, this crisis appeared with ulcers, by means of which the mercury was evidently ejected, for as soon as the ulcers were healed, the old suppressed hepatitis made its appearance again, and this relapse was soon removed by hydriatric treatment, as the affixed remark will show, so that the lady left her restorer, Priessnitz, thankfully, and with renewed vital powers.

*Remark.*—The process in this case may be explained thus: A detrimental substance, lurking in the body of the lady, had projected itself, perhaps in consequence of a cold, upon the liver, which, in consequence of an energetic endeavour to cast it off, had become inflamed. The doctor now entered upon the field with antiphlogistic mercury, and paralysed the struggle, the instilled poison having deprived the body of its power—thus inducing, from that moment, the chronic complaint. As soon as, through the water-cure, the medical poison was driven out of the body by means of the ulcers, the organism strengthened itself again to a renewed struggle against the old inimical matter, which was still fettered to the liver. The former inflammation returned, and immediately after it, under the beneficial care of the water-physician, Priessnitz, the most complete restoration. Such is the efficacy of all the antiphlogistic substances, be they called medicine, leeches, venesection, &c.—they remove the acute malady by debilitating the organism, and will either kill in this way or introduce chronic languor. From thence ori-

ginate the heavy sufferings, which follow at the heels of the allopathic treatment of inflammations. The doctors will try, no doubt, to persuade themselves and their patients that this was an inseparable consequence of the disease. Let every fever, every inflammation, be treated with cold water, and every trace of them will disappear in a few days.

2. *Dorsal-complaints and Gout, in consequence of a treatment by mercury.*

An officer of the Austrian army, about fifty years old, but of a strong constitution, and still vigorous cutaneous system, was driven, by gout and desperate pains in the back, to Priessnitz, after having in vain consulted many celebrated physicians.

“Well,” said the shrewd but unsophisticated physician, “you have got a good deal of mercury into your body?”—“Yes,” was the answer—“but this was thirty years ago, and my sufferings, which are increasing every year, did not begin till long after that treatment. With the mercury you can of course have nothing to

do.”—A sarcastic smile, peculiar to Priessnitz’s face spread itself over his features, whilst he answered: “You will live to judge otherwise, you will see the venereal ulcer reappear, and this exactly at the same place from which it had been driven inwardly by your doctor.”

It lasted five months before the crisis took place, which had however been preceded by a considerable relief from pains and invigoration of the organism. In the sixth month, there appeared the bathing-rash; and after its healing, in the seventh month, furuncles and little ulcers amounting to a hundred and sixty in number. This was one of the most horrible and dangerous crises which had ever been witnessed in the Gräfenberg. When it was over, the patient felt very well, was possessed of an excellent appetite, became fleshy, and believed himself to be radically cured.

“Well, we will wait anyhow for what may follow!” said father Priessnitz, and ordered him again under the “*Sturzbad*” (fall-bath). Three weeks afterwards the alarm-drum was beaten again in the body of the patient—a new crisis—



again from sixty to seventy ulcers. Then followed a rest of some weeks, and then some twenty ulcers more, and, for the last time, about a dozen made their appearance. The mercury having been thus expelled, the venereal ulcer did indeed come forth, but in the lapse of two weeks the remainder of the poison was driven away by sweat and bathing—without mercury or any other medicine whatever.

“Now, sir,” asserted Priessnitz, “you may consider yourself cured!”

I need not add, that the pains in the back and the gout were removed forever, and that the officer went down from the Græfenberg merrily, and like a new born being to his home, where his friends could scarcely recognise him on account of the total change which his exterior had undergone, from that of a pale invalid into a blooming and vigorous man.

This is a specimen of the wonders of Priessnitz, but only one among a thousand of his cures from the effects of mercury and suppressed venereal diseases.

The experience at the Græfenberg has incon-

trovertibly established the fact, that a mercurial poisoning can only be cured by water.

*Remark.*—It is indeed very probable, that syphilis never has been really cured by medical treatment, though both physician and patient believe it, and even should all syphilitic symptoms forever disappear. This poison is by mercury only surrounded, and together with the vehicle kept bound in the body. Nearly all former syphilitic persons, who had at the Græfenberg gone successfully through another cure, have, to their surprise, finally regained the long-forgotten syphilitic symptom. Whoever, in any period of his former life, has used mercury, (as nearly every one has done, who has been treated by an allopathist) he may with certainty reckon, in case of any subsequent disease, that mercury will play a principal part in it, or even the only, though a latent one. Frequent instances prove this fact, as for example the following:

3. An Austrian economist, aged about forty years, of a very powerful constitution, came with

a leg stiff at the knee, and crippling along to the institute at Græfenberg. He attributed the cause solely to a fall with his horse, which had happened nine years before, having forgotten that nine years previous to the fall, and consequently eighteen years before he came to Priessnitz, he had undergone a very easy, and, *as he believed*, successful cure by mercury. In the third week of the water-cure a small eruption on the stiff knee became visible, then large furuncles—look there, the mercury. In the fifth week he could inflect the leg at the knee, and in the seventh he went to his home, (indeed too early, but called away by business), to finish there the water-cure as well as he could.

*Remark.*—Priessnitz has found, from the experience of many individuals, that mercury can lie for many years inactive in the organism, apparently in a state of sleep. But it is then only lurking like a snake; and as soon as a disease overcomes the body, it will assuredly creep out of its ambush, in order to exert its malignant influence in the work of destruction. In no disease is the crisis more violent and pain-

ful by ulcers than in mercurial complaints, therefore in no case is the special attention of a skilful water-physician more required than in such instances. For persons who cannot obtain such assistance, the notice may be beneficial, that the cure consists in a cold fall-bath (“*Sturzbad*”), cold sweating and sitting baths. They may further be admonished not to be frightened when they see, after being freed of the mercury, the original poison, which they considered as removed, reawakened in the external symptom. They may employ local warming, cataplasms of cold water, and may continue sweating and bathing, until the loathsome enemy take his leave forever.

#### 4. *Cephalalgia chronica, arthritide complicata.*

A middle-aged merchant from Bohemia visited Priessnitz, expecting to be relieved by him from a most painful cephalalgia of long standing. Whilst the cure was going on, relief was indeed soon imparted to the patient, but suddenly the disorder returned with increased fury—a fever joined the pains, and one evening it was reported

to Priessnitz that his cephalalgic patient was raging in the most horrible manner, that he was destroying the windows of his room, and threatening to murder his wife.

“Very good, indeed,” remarked Priessnitz, “now his cure is certain!”

A doctor, who was present, thought that Priessnitz himself had suddenly fallen into a state of delirium, and asked, with astonishment, how this could be taken for a sign of approaching recovery?

“Because,” replied Priessnitz, “an ulcer is forming in the patient’s head, which will discharge itself, and all the mischievous matter, through the ears.”

The doctor’s mouth expanded still more, not for the purpose of uttering something wise, but on account of his utter loss to comprehend how this could be possible.

What Priessnitz had predicted was literally fulfilled. He has repeatedly observed, that in aggravated rheumatic headache and affections of the eyes, ulcers are forming in the interior of the head, which will flow out through the ears.

The patient had once laboured under cephalitis, which had been treated according to allopathic principles, that is turned into chronic misery.

## CHAPTER V.

## OF THE HYDRIATRIC METHOD OF CURING.

RETURNING from a digression in which I have laid before my readers some few sketches of cures, out of those thousands which have excited the surprise and the astonishment of the world, I shall now pursue the plan I have laid down for my little book, and, having given an outline of my opinions about Allopathy and Homœopathy, will now give a short account of the hydriatric method of healing.

The Hydriatric is that mode of curing, which, by the application of the coldest water alone, (without the help of ice or any artificial means), entirely ejects all material causes of disorders, under whatever form they may appear, from every part of the human organism.

Wherever, in the sequel of this book, the word "*water*" is used, the freshest and purest is always understood.

## § 1.

*The process in healing by water.*

It is an incorrect designation to call water, as many have done, a universal medicine. Water is no medicine at all. Pure cold water has not the least medicinal particle in it. But truly may pure water be called a genuine panacea for all diseases, in every degree, that are curable.

Now the question arises: By what virtue of the water is this astonishing effect produced, not being itself a medicine? Our answer is, by its solving, cleansing and destroying power. The healing power of water emanates from its strong tendency to dissolve, which exercises a constant operation in destroying all organic life, by resolving it into its elementary parts.

The process may be thus described. Water has the power of extracting and separating heterogeneous ingredients out of their combinations. This power it exercises upon animals, plants, and their *educts*. The human body receives daily, hourly, foreign matter, which must leave it again, and this mostly by escaping out of the



millions of openings and little doors of the skin, called the pores (*pori*). If this necessary process is either interrupted for some time, or going on imperfectly, disease must follow. Water, by its apparently inimical process of dissolving, promotes this operation: viz. when it surrounds the skin, it operates on it by sucking, and displays a tendency to resolve the whole body into its elementary ingredients. The body resists—reacts against it, and permits itself only to be deprived of that which is foreign to it, and makes it sick. If the body is kept too long under the water, it must give up even that which belongs to it; and is weakened by this privation. It may be seen from this, that without the superintendence of a water-physician, a too abundant use of water can become injurious to health. Consequently, the water does not operate at all as a medicine, but only by its power of destroying every substance inimical to life, in which operation it is successful—and here the process ought to stop.

But whence originates that instinctive feeling of human nature against a very cold bath? Na-

ture teaches us peculiarly, by the observation of the untamed animals, that we may place much reliance upon instinct: and, forsooth, may the advice be given to every one to follow the instinct of the palate? It appears, therefore, necessary to explain the existing error of the instinct against the ice cold bath.

Man has, indeed, neither in the state of perfect health nor in a case of acute disease, an instinctive aversion against a cold bath. 'The sick, in the acute heat of fever and inflammation, longs for it with vehemence, and it is only when he is poisoned and degraded by medical treatment to a state of chronical languor that he shudders at the touch of cold water. Every enervated individual participates in the feeling for the very same reason; because the neglect of strengthening the body produces enervation, ruins the health, and spoils the instinct.

Thus the main cause of the healing power of water is explained. Another restoring quality possessed by water is its *coldness*, for which reason the water-physician can use no other than very cold water. By entering into the cold bath, the

fluid lying immediately under the skin is indeed, in consequence of the resolving power and coldness of the water, secerned and removed from the body; but the more deeply situated masses of sap and blood are affected, only in consequence of the mechanical pressure and coldness, not by the power of the water, and are consequently rushing into the interior parts of the body. But when the succeeding increase of temperature takes place, caused by a lively motion or rubbing of the whole body, the repressed mass of blood and fluid returns with doubled force back to the skin, carrying with it from the interior new diseased materials. During the reaction, the skin steams and labours, partly in order to reject the matter thus brought to it; partly, by the struggle, to regain the disturbed normal state. In entering into the next cold bath, there will consequently be below the skin a new mass of matter to be secerned from the organism, and sucked off by the water. The struggles of reaction begin anew; new impurities are driven out of the interior to the skin: and thus the process of purification daily goes forward.

Many other of the restoring powers of cold water, which are generally known, are here omitted, for instance its consisting of the two life-supporting elements (viz. oxygen and hydrogen); further its quality of opening the pores of the skin, its detergent properties, &c.

From the description here given, the following two points result :

1. That this process, for the cause of health, must be observed, and, if observed,

2. That health is advancing, though slowly yet surely.

*Remark.*—Priessnitz has, indeed, by his brilliant and penetrating sagacity, discovered, from time to time, many means by which the cures by water are rendered more rapid and less dangerous.

The result of this whole section is therefore the following :

*“Water cures the organism of no disease, but it forces the organism to cure itself.”*

Thousands of years ago the human family were looking out for the true method of healing from the shop of the apothecary, yet never

turned their eyes towards the place where it was really deposited. The race may be compared to a distracted man seeking for his hat, which was already on his head. Man carries the whole *materia medica* under his skin, and the key to it is—*water*.

## § 2.

### *Which diseases are curable by water ?*

To enumerate them singly, and by their names, would be a tedious and useless undertaking, serving only to extend the limits of this little book farther than necessary ; therefore I shall prefer naming those diseases which cannot be cured by the use of cold water, this requiring only a few words.

Incurable, for the water-physician, are *all chronic diseases of the lungs, that have already made too destructive an inroad on this organ*. Incurable are further *all organic faults and all diseases of such persons as are deprived either of a cutaneous system susceptible of operating in behalf of the cure, or of a sufficient degree of vital power*. Yet Priessnitz has already per-

fectly restored many patients who had been declared by the most celebrated doctors to be absolutely incurable on account of their deficient vital power.—That malady, which could pertinaciously resist a continued water-treatment, must be rooted indeed very deeply in an entirely bankrupt organism.

The healing of all acute diseases to Priessnitz is but play. He has, for instance, treated nervous fevers and inflammatory attacks in all their degrees and “stadia;” and of such patients he has not lost one among a thousand by death. On the contrary, the most radical cure has always been performed in a few days, and this without subsequent sufferings. How lamentably reverse is the fate of such unfortunate people as have been treated (or rather ill-treated) by medicine-physicians!—It is, for instance, generally said, that nervous fever always leaves behind it suffering, lasting often for life;—but nervous fever, if left to itself will not do this, and it is only nervous fever when suppressed by medical poison, often these poisons alone that

does it. The same can be said of most of the acute diseases.

Water has further the most decided and rapid efficacy in open wounds, and all disorders, the seat of which is on the surface of the body. Water supplants all the horrid art of cutting, burning, extirpating and skinning on the flesh and bones of man—the butchering art of the surgical operator.

Amongst the chronic diseases curable by water, mercurial languor, in its infinitely variegated forms, stands at their head. It is admitted that half of the patients at Græfenberg came to reject this metal. The Græfenberg is truly a mine of quicksilver, renting to its proprietor more than many a gold mine, though the mercury is here ejected in infinitely small invisible particles out of the bodies of the patients. This is the only thing which might render the practice of the water-physician disgusting, that he has eternally to drive out the demon of mercury from the bodies of those poisoned by it.

All gout and rheumatism, with certainty, may be cured by water. The piles and disorders of

the belly, of all kinds; scrofulous complaints, rhachitis, white swelling, itch and venereal maladies; and besides the above named, a host of other sufferings, originating from stagnant, sharp and putrid fluids of the body, together with the disorders emanating from medical poisonings, which can admit as many forms as there are learned names of diseases.

Special mention may be made here of the general corruption and disturbance of the nerves. But he, in whose dorsal medulla the bankrupt has already established itself, is not to be cured; nor will any one derive that benefit from it, who, in consequence of mercurial poisoning, is long ago perfectly paralysed; neither can it afford help in cases of deformity, crooked legs, or stupidity. Such unhappy beings have indeed sometimes repaired to Græfenberg as a sanctuary of graces and wonders, but they have had immediately to retrace their steps, with the sentence of incurability. Priessnitz likewise dismisses every individual labouring under a total privation of the vital power of the organism, lost



in too protracted a struggle with the chronic demon.

The neighbouring doctors have frequently sent such bankrupt patients to Priessnitz, with the secret intention of putting their death to his account, but such insidious fellows found their master in Priessnitz, who surpassed in cunning the most crafty of them. He sent these unfortunate beings without delay back to them who had intended to trouble him with them. In some instances, Priessnitz even received such patients, when he saw any possibility of their restoration, and dismissed them sound and whole, which was still more mortifying to those who had employed them to annoy him.

Such malicious doctors were unconscientious enough, in order to have a pretext for pretending that Priessnitz had sacrificed a man to his water-system, to disturb the quiet of the last days of a dying fellow-being, to cause heavy expenses to the family of the candidate for death, and to deceive the sufferer, by exciting in him a hope of restoration, only with a view of hurting Priessnitz by their venom.

This remarkable man, in judging of the state of a patient and the probability of the cure, looks only at *his dress*—(this he uses to call the skin of the suppliant for help)—and at *his eyes*. By the former, he learns whether the skin is still possessed of the energy requisite to the healing process; by the latter, whether the patient is in general still enjoying some vital power. The condition of the patient's pulse, tongue, &c. is of no moment to him. To the physician operating by medicines, an abnormal state of the pulse can cause considerable anxiety, but how could the water-physician be troubled by it, since he possesses an infallible means of directly removing the most violent fever, provided the skin be not untractable, but still in a state of vigour and activity.

### § 3.

#### *Description of the mode of healing adopted by Priessnitz in some acute diseases.*

It is not the intention of the author of this book to give formal instruction respecting the treatment of single diseases by water, his aim

being much more to convince the reader of the excellency of the water-practice in general, in order to procure for it in America what it has already obtained in Europe, adherents for the promotion of the welfare of the suffering part of the human race, who will then feel inclined to acquire a special knowledge of the particulars respecting such cures by viewing the processes themselves. But the treatment of some diseases will be briefly laid before the reader, in order to render, by those examples, the nature of the whole method conspicuous.

*Priessnitz*, the founder of this great healing system, has formed, for himself, his own views about the causes of diseases, which, in a few words, will be prefixed to a description of his healing method, for the better understanding of the same.

These views coincide with those of many former physicians. They are truly material, entirely, grossly material, but in this material world they are permitted, and may be so by right, provided the healing power, considered as something superior to matter, is not denied.

Priessnitz asserts, "*that the cause of every disease is a material substance, which must be thrown out from the body.*" Homœopathy, on the contrary, introduces into her nosology a kind of spirituality, which, in matters of such a palpable nature, appears not to be in its right place; whilst Allopathy decides nothing about this question. Homœopathy speaks of disharmonies in the nerves themselves, or single functions—of dynamical rather than mechanical and chemical causes of diseases, and that school has evidently been led by the theoretical error of this spirituality, or semblance to immateriality, into the practical nonsense of the ridiculous decillionth parts. How arrogant and contradictory to daily experience is the exclusion and the disrespect shown to the "*autonomia* and *autokratia*" of nature, or her independent healing power! And this is the foundation of all healing operations. It supports them, guides them, modifies them, yea produces them, often quite alone. This healing power of nature, this self-restoration, which is so gloriously displayed in water-cures; that mighty process, which is

understood by the word *Crisis*, and for which even the most selfish allopathists entertain the most profound respect, is entirely wanting in Homœopathy, and this is a defect alike inconceivable and pernicious. Hahnemann is undoubtedly a master in the science of Pharmacy, and has gained imperishable laurels by his treatise on poisoning by arsenic, (though immediately after him this doctrine has become considerably improved). His name will also last by the production of his so-called "soluble quicksilver;" but he ruins his well-earned reputation by his quack-like wandering from his limits into regions wherein he is an utter stranger.

That the views of Priessnitz are correct can be demonstrated in every institute that heals by water, for the furuncles will be plainly visible; but not only the sight and touch, but also the sense of smelling, even that of tasting, if found desirable, would make the skeptical sure that all the causes of diseases are material causes, not belonging to the body but inimical to it; and that they cast themselves upon the skin in order to be ejected from it. It could also be demon-

strated, that by a long and radical water-cure a complete renovation of the whole mass of sap, blood, and flesh of the body is undergone.

Here I remark once for all, that the water-curer "*never will employ any other means but pure cold water, not even in cases where vomiting and purging are desirable, both of which are effected by draughts and clysters of cold water.*"

In acute diseases, the tendency of the cure is directly to remove the causes of the disease, either by purging and vomiting (in gastric complaints), or commonly by bathing and sweating. In chronic diseases, on the contrary, the aim is to turn them into acute attacks,—for these are the crises of the water-cure,—by which the healing is easily and successfully obtained.

a. *Nervous fevers.*

For a nervous fever, such an organism only is susceptible, as is not yet labouring under a decayed nervous system. Real impotency of that system has been, by water, so far removed that it could afford the susceptibility for a nervous fever, which was then very easily cured. The healing method is the following:

The patient labouring under this fever is put, (as has already been successfully done, by Gianini, in Padua,) whilst in the state of the utmost heat and the most raging paroxysm, into a bath as cold as possible, and left therein until he is cooled to the very chattering of the teeth. Then the patient is taken out of the bath, and powerfully rubbed all over with woollen cloths, after which he is swaddled into warm coverings and overlaid with beds. If the heat returns during the following increase of warmth of the body, the process is repeated, until by bathing and rubbing a great activity of the skin—a real cutaneous fever—has been excited, which takes the fury of the fever away from the nerves upon itself. Then sweating is necessary, in order to eject the noxious matter, which has now been brought below the skin. To excite sweating would be often very difficult, if Priessnitz had not discovered an expedient, which is at the same time the most efficacious and harmless of all sudoriferous means. A linen cloth, after having been laid in cold water, is wrung out very carefully, and is then laid closely round the naked

body. Over this cloth, beds are placed in sufficient quantity over the patient to warm him thoroughly. After the space of half an hour the patient is taken out, and put under the former process of sweating by means of beds.

Here as ever, without exception, the patient drinks nothing but cold water, and as much of it as he desires, provided that he, when well, was not entirely alienated from its use. In what manner the healing results in consequence of that treatment, is clear in itself, but it must still be remarked, for the benefit of those averse to cold bathing, that such baths are not detrimental to the most heated bodies, provided their high temperature is not caused by spontaneous motions operating on the respiration,—of which more below.

b. *Inflammatory diseases.*

Quite similar to the foregoing is the treatment in inflammations, only that, according to the circumstances, cooling local cataplasms of cold water may become necessary. The aim of the cure is the same, viz. to take out the heat by means of the cold baths, to effect by the sub-



sequent rubbing a great activity of the skin and reaction, and finally by sweating to cast out the sickening matter.

The learned mother of quacks, Allopathy, in this takes butchers for patterns, and orders blood-letting—a detestable expedient, which can indeed save from a hot death (but never so surely as cold water), but which paralyses the organism to such a degree that it resigns, from weakness, the effort to heal. And this Allopathy calls healing. The letting of blood might find excuse where cold water could not be had; but cold water takes the life-endangering heat out of the inflamed body much more rapidly than venesection,—and rapidly this must be done, since here death steps in rapidly.

How Homœopathy can expect any result from decillionth parts in such a terrible heat of inflammation—is inconceivable.

#### § 4.

*Of the healing process in most chronic diseases.*

DEBILITY is not a malady, but something worse, therefore the effect of water is slower

than in other cases. Its application for it is very simple: baths of short duration in large bathing vessels; long-lasting local baths, when feet, arms, &c. are exposed to the water; and water-cataplasms. The method of cure in most chronical diseases is the following:

The patient, who is not yet used to cold baths, must by ablutions and half-baths in lukewarm water—the temperature of which must yet never rise above 14 degrees of Reaumur (64 Fahrenheit)—be prepared for the cold bath,—the temperature of which must never amount to more than 10 degrees—the colder the better. After the lapse of this time of preparation, every morning at four o'clock a menial of the institute will appear, and enclose the naked patient carefully, like a precious jewel, in the woollen sweating-cloths, over which beds are laid thickly and firmly. It is advisable to drink previously a glass of cold water, since the refreshing draught cannot be enjoyed till the coming forth of the sweat.—One or two hours afterwards, when heat and restlessness announce the approaching sweat, the limbs are to be put in motion below the

covering, by rubbing the legs together, and the arms against the body. When the sweat is breaking out, cold water is to be drunk: a glass after each quarter of an hour, and care is to be taken for the admission of fresh air by the opening of the windows.—The body, having thus bedewed itself richly, is now qualified for the cold bath. Nobody is permitted to sweat for a longer time than two hours: and in going to the bath every one is warned against cooling his body; whilst, on the contrary, the naked limbs may, in returning from the bath, be exposed leisurely to snow and rain.—In the bath, the patient must not remain above five minutes, several of them not one minute, and it is advisable to romp and toss about while in it. The patient having dressed himself at the open window, takes a walk, and does not appear at the breakfast table till half an hour after the bath.

The sound sweat may be easily distinguished from that which results from fever and debility; the latter being discernable from the former by causing the skin to become immediately dry as soon as it is exposed to the cold air. These

unwholesome sweats must first be removed, before the patient begins the afore-described cure. The most efficacious means against these debilitant morbid sweats are cold baths, to be taken in the very eruption of them, though even in the midst of the night. — “Ice-cold baths! in sweat!!—how senseless!!!”—this may be the prevailing thought of many readers of this book, whilst shuddering involuntarily. But several thousands of experiments, many of them furnished by very weak patients, have placed it beyond all doubt that the cold bath is most salubrious when taken whilst the skin was steaming; only provided, that the perspiration was not produced by motion exciting the whole organism, but in a state of rest under warm coverings. —To an individual sweating by violent exercise a cold bath can cause instant death.

The reason, why in all diseases the cold bath is to be taken whilst the skin is sweating, is self-evident from the preceding remarks. — The healthy may bathe even whilst the skin is not inclined towards sweating, but they should never whilst shuddering with cold. How rotten are

the fruits which the learning of men produces ! All the great and little doctors, charlatans and quacks, have not been able to find out this first rule of bathing, far less to establish the whole glorious system for which we are now indebted to a farmer !

To the inhabitant of the northern regions, cold sweating-baths are, as a mean of healing, most beneficial. This is seen in the examples of the Russians, the northern Indians, and the Esquimaux, who proverbially owe their health to sweating-baths. Yet their process must not be compared with that of Priessnitz, since they force the body by external heat to the utmost stretch of transpiration, which requires at least a Russian constitution, whilst Priessnitz restores even the weakest by a careful calculation of the degree in which the power of water is to be applied.

Let us now return to the proper subject of this section.

After having thus bathed for eight or fourteen days, the falling- (*Sturz*) baths are combined with the former. This kind of falling-baths are,

at Græfenberg, of a very coarse description. The Sophia, this is the name of the most powerful of them, is twenty feet high, and her ray of water is four inches in diameter. Nearly all the visitors of the institute are desirous of participating in its benefits, and the awaiting of their turns is truly tedious. The water is very cold. In using it, precaution is peculiarly needful that neither head nor stomach are exposed to the falling ray (quite in conformity with some celebrated Italian baths, where the exposure of the head has often resulted in immediate death). These baths last only from five to twenty minutes, and they are generally taken before dinner. Two or three hours after it, according to circumstances, either another sweating takes place, or a sitting or foot-bath. In the evening, before retiring to rest, either a foot or general bath is to be taken, the latter without a previous sweating process.

From the enumeration of the daily bath, it may be concluded that the whole day is consumed in operations belonging to the cure. There is no time to be spared for pleasure-

parties, nor for indulging in hypochondriac thoughts; but the cure must be carried on in such a forcible way only under the superintendence of a fully competent water-physician, and by patients enjoying powerful constitutions. Whoever would wish to try it at home, ought first to consult a water-physician, and to bathe seldom.

In general, the water-cure is not to be performed hurriedly. Its progress varies considerably as to time, but it always lasts longer than many people are here inclined to expect, that is in chronic diseases of considerable standing, of which alone we now speak. Middle-aged persons may easily spend half a year in the perfect restoration from old, deeply rooted disease; and with older and weaker individuals even a year may sometimes elapse before the end is attained. Yea, some cases have happened, where patients of an entirely disordered constitution have had to devote more than one year to their restoration. But still more time is required for the cure, when a patient wishes to cure himself, whilst engaged in following the

duties of his vocation, than under the superintendence of a skilful water-physician.

### § 5.

*Of the method used in Epidemics and infectious ulcerous diseases.*

#### a. *Epidemics.*

It is an easy thing to ascertain the cause of those epidemics which occur after a sudden change in the temperature (colds and their consequences); or after too severe labours in hot seasons (gastric diseases after harvest); or after the retreat of the water in swampy places (putrid fevers); but whence are derived the new horrors, cholera and influenza?—Where have they been generated?—Different opinions have been promulgated, which we will pass over in silence. The most probable supposition is that of their having been produced by innumerable and invisible animalculæ filling the air. For if a chronic corruption of the air itself were the cause, either the lungs would suffer, or the epidemics would take upon them the character of putrid fever, or would at least always be connected



with fever. In cholera, the stomach is the seat of the evil, probably because the innumerable animalcules, being invisible to the naked eye, can enter therein together with the nourishment, in large numbers. By respiration they cannot get admittance to the lungs, the wind-pipe allowing no passage to any thing living, but only to real air, yet certainly also to corrupt air. But if chronical corruption of the air cannot be the cause, then must it be attributed to animalcules. Since cholera expands itself over a space of thousands of miles without infection, and yet not so far as gases and animals (every other thing corporeal precipitating itself before having gone through such a space), the conclusion that it arises from animalcules becomes probable.

In the influenza, the probability is still greater in favour of animalcules. In this disease the throat, the eyes, and the nose are suffering,—obviously the openings offering the most easy entry to animalcules. Here the conjecture might be admissible, that the influenza-animalcule preponderates in size over that of the cholera, the former sticking more to the entrances of the

body, whilst the latter enters the more interior parts. Further, it might be hazarded that the animalcules of the cholera and those of the influenza are different forms of the same animal (as for instance caterpillar and butterfly), both diseases commonly following each other in rapid succession in the same country.

Whatever may be the reasons, so much is true, that the water-cure has vindicated itself as the surest remedy for these evils; and still more sure and beneficial is the process by which these dangers are prevented. Its efficacy in this instance would be easily explained, if caused by animalcules filling the air, for each animal of the air dies in water.

The treatment of the influenza consists chiefly in general baths and sweating; also in local applications of water, snuffing the water into the nostrils, when the interior membrane of the nose is suffering; bathing the eyes, when this organ is affected; but principally in drinking much water.

The cholera in the beginning is overcome by long-lasting and frequent sitting-baths, joined to

excessive water drinking ; by the help of vomiting and purging, by which the healing is effected. But when spasms and cold limbs have already taken place, the sitting-baths will be without benefit ; in this case cold bathing, and principally rubbing, till the blood circulates freely, will be required. When the cutaneous activity is restored, sweating must follow, and sitting-baths conclude the treatment. Priessnitz has cured patients suffering by cholera, who were given up by the physicians as incurable. " Give me," says Dr. Rause, a water-physician, " a thousand of such patients, provided they have taken no medicine, and are still capable of vomiting and purging,—and if a single one of them dies under my hands, I will be answerable for it." The medicine takes, according to the common nonsense, the symptoms for the disease itself, and attacks them ; thus in the time of cholera far more patients have been killed by it, than by the epidemic.

b. *Infectious ulcerous diseases.*

It is a good deal more probable in ulcerous diseases than in epidemics that the sufferings

are caused by animalcules. But they differ from those that produce epidemics peculiarly in the faculty of propagating their species in the human body, and further by their inability to fly. The former quality of the ulcer-producing animals renders the sufferings caused by them a chronical one; the second, an infecting one, without the power of extending itself epidemically. The diseases here understood are *the itch, the venereal maladies, and leprosy*. The animalcules that produce itch, and those existing in venereal ulcers have already been observed. Very little of this poison introduced into the system soon pervades the whole body; whilst, for instance, the poison of snakes, though it indeed likewise permeates the whole body, yet it becomes the weaker the more it is diffused and extended.

The cure of these diseases consists in sweating and bathing, and in extracting local cataplasms; that is, linen is placed closely upon the ulcers, wrung out of cold water, and then covered with warm cloths. These cataplasms are as often repeated as they get dry, and are in all chronic

diseases an excellent local means of strengthening the body and extracting from it its impurities.

By sweating, the cause of the ulcers is brought to the skin, and by the cold water it is destroyed. It is clear that each single animalcule cannot be individually killed by applying water to the orifice of each of them. This is done by wholesale, as in the case of mercury; only that in that case the whole body would be exposed to poisoning, whilst in this the water is healing the organism.

There is another class of ulcerous diseases, not chronical, to which the small pox, measles, rash, &c., belong, propagating themselves not only by contact, but also by the atmosphere of the sick-chamber. On this account the supposition of winged animalcules might find place, propagating themselves indeed in the body, but becoming, after some time, extinct, as is the case with some zoophytes. The cure is nearly like that of chronic ulcerous diseases; only that, as in acute cases, it is very rapid and certain. When measles or rash have entered the interior of the body by colds, no surer means for sending

them back to the skin can be found, than a bath, followed by rubbing and warm covering, or the above-mentioned surrounding of the body with a wet linen cloth. With the reaction, the rash will return to the skin; from whence it may be driven by sweating and bathing.

Sections 3, 4 and 5 are by no means written with the intention that any individual, by their instruction, should treat any of these diseases. For this purpose they are useless, since the general principles require, in practice, to be modified according to the various degrees of the diseases and the different constitutions of the patient. The development of the laws, according to which these differences are to be regulated, belongs to a larger work, not to the aim of this little book.

#### § 6.

*Explication of the healing process, in the treatment described in section 4.*

As an exposition of the mode of healing by cold sweating-baths may exemplify the whole

process, the following remarks are put together in the most concise manner :

- a. Bad humours, deposits, &c. are forced to follow the other impurities in their march to the skin, from whence they are expelled.
- b. Into the sick and inactive organs, a fresh current of new and daily improved fluids are introduced and rapidly led through them; to the sick parts the process of their heathful alimentation is re-iterated by way of a beneficially enforced exercise, continued till they are again sufficiently accustomed to their functions in order to re-assume the process of self-alimentation, that is the assimilation and change of the imported nourishment into their own substance.
- c. All bodily functions in their totality are involved in the same process into the same manner of operating, the cure acting not individually upon single parts of the body, but upon the whole organism.

The baths themselves, without previous sweating for hours (when the skin is rubbed or warmed by the covering of beds), forces the

organism, by the reaction following, to bring every thing removable to the exterior teguments, and in consequence of it the before-mentioned three wholesome effects take place. Undoubtedly the previous sweating accelerates the cure, but it must be omitted with very weak persons, and is in general only required when noxious materials are to be removed from the body.

When the sitting-bath is taken for the purpose of strengthening the power of digestion and of the nerves only, or with the intention of removing congestion from the breast and head, its duration must not be extended over ten minutes; but if, at the same time, the materials of a disease are to be taken out of the body by it, it must be prolonged to twenty or even to forty minutes.

The sitting-bath has the decided effect of turning the activity from the cerebral system to that of the "ganglia;" it is of incalculable value to such persons as are labouring under strong mental exertions, and are in need of such a leading off, principally men who study deeply and poets.—Those parts of the body which are peculiarly exposed to cold baths gain very per-



ceptibly in external strength. And since the artificial padding-out of some parts of the body is so much in vogue with the fair sex, the sitting-bath may now be recommended to all ladies who would look elegantly. They can, without expense, by means of perseveringly used sitting-baths, supplant all artificial additions, and avoid much expense and ridicule, by substituting real flesh.

The first effect of the sitting-bath is the opposite of the second, which has a very lasting efficacy; viz. first, the blood is forced into the head. Persons to whom this happens in a higher than common degree may lay water cataplasms upon the head, yet only in cases of emergency, because the intended delivery of the head will be more completely performed if the head remains dry. The efficacy of the sitting-bath is heightened much by rubbing and kneading the belly with wetted hands during the time of the bath.

The effect of foot-baths is quite similar. They lead blood, heat, and the materials of diseases from the upper parts to the feet. Cold foot-baths are the only absolute remedy for the suffering of cold feet, particularly if the bath is

succeeded by a long walk. — The duration of foot-baths for the purpose of warming the feet is about ten minutes ; but if the aim be to stir up and cast out deleterious matter, they may last forty minutes. Such foot-baths are to be recommended principally to those poisoned by mercury, since this poison is mostly deposited in the external parts of the body, ready to produce in its time podagra, paralytic symptoms, or to lay the foundation of dropsy.

But for the purpose of stirring up the materials that cause disease—whether they result from the errors of physicians or of the patients themselves—no bath exists that operates so rapidly and decidedly as the fall-bath. The effect is sometimes nearly an immediate one ; on the place where for years the pains had slumbered, the water-ray will re-awaken them, so that they will smart sufficiently, even before the patient will have arrived at his lodgings from the first bath. This stirring up and putting to flight of the slumbering cause of disease is “*a main requisite*” of the cure. It is effected in a low degree *by every cold bath*, more so **BY THE**

COLD SWEATING-BATH, but most by the COLD FALL-BATH. For this reason the abuse of the fall-bath can become dangerous—and even fatal; but it is abuse when this bath is resorted to before the activity of the skin has been awakened by cold sweating-baths, and all its little doors have been opened, in order that the stirred-up materials of diseases may escape through them.

If the efficacy of all those various baths is considered together, it will be found natural, that whilst the cure is progressing many pains will arise; the provoked demons of the diseases will not be put to flight without a hard struggle, and this very struggle with the healing energy of nature is the cause of the pains. Pains already slumbering and forgotten for twenty and more years are re-awakened, if their causing materials are still in the body, when the cure begins to operate.

Two different signs prognosticate the desired cure: *a very reddened skin after the bath, and the awakening of old pains.* Cicatrices of old badly cured wounds frequently reopen.

From these remarks the conclusion may be drawn, that the common process of healing by water in chronic diseases is the following: That the poor bent down body is aroused, by the water, out of its lethargic slumber to revolt against its tyrannical oppressor and that it assists the organism faithfully in the casting out of this most dangerous of all tyrants, or in other words:—*The water-cure changes the chronical suffering into an acute struggle, called CRISIS, and this being introduced it heals the body surely and radically.*

Before the body begins this struggle, the power of its enemy has already become much weakened. By sweating and other evacuations much matter detrimental to health has been removed. The body opens not the battle without having first weighed its own powers against those of its enemy, and having ascertained a preponderance on its side. In this calculation the organism is guided by so sure an instinct, that it may be said without hesitation: “*An acute malady will never display itself, where the body has not a surplus of power over its*

*enemy; if it yet succumbs, the fault will always be either in a wrong diet or in the perverse treatment of the physician."*

Boastingly as Homœopathy extols her doctrine, "*Similia similibus curare*," they cannot yet explain, even to their own satisfaction, the operating process of their principle, and are only astonished, not enlightened, by their system. But it performs this, by exciting the body through "*similia*" to an acute struggle in chronical sufferings, or by gradation of the acute struggle in already acute diseases. From this solution it follows, that Homœopathy in acute diseases can be of no importance; yet possibly, if the doses were not so ridiculously small, it might have some in chronical diseases. Yet the taking of medicines, of whatsoever nature, will be dangerous and reprehensible so long as cold water is to be had, by which to perform cures with safety.

### § 7.

*The crisis, produced by the water-cure and its treatment.*

The crisis plays a main part in all water cures; for if it is obtained, the healing is certain.

Crisis is therefore the raising of the organism against the chronical enemy; it is a violent endeavour for delivery,—a fiery revolution against the tyranny of the disease. On this account these crises carry all those signs of hot diseases, fevers indeed often, but weak ones, when the organism and its enemy are not valiant combatants, or when the preponderance of the organism over its enemy is very great.

The effect of the crisis is, however, the casting out of the materials causing illness, by means of urine, excrements, sweating, or ulcers: and in the treatment of the crisis the leading principle of the water-physician is—*that the enemy must not be excited, when he observes him to be still too powerful and able to kill*; in this case all exciting applications of the water must be laid aside. This general principle admits, according to the special cases of sickness, the following forms:

In case the organism has called forth a violent fever to assist it in producing ulcers, the patient is repeatedly closely wrapped in linen cloths. By this measure the eruption, seated beneath the

skin, is partially driven out, and the fever is partly alleviated. But when the critical symptoms appear in too great a number and in too violent a degree, and too many and too large ulcers are coming forth: then cold water must not be resorted to at all, because the crisis would be heightened, and nothing must be done, excepting ablutions with water deprived of its freshness—in order to keep the skin open—and besides this, sometimes a mild sweat.

From this the now established principle follows: that in critical symptoms of importance, first, the fall-bath—as the most exciting mean—has to cease. But if the eruption amounts to nothing more than an easy bathing rash, the falling bath is to be continued zealously, and warming, extracting, cold cataplasms of water are to be applied. These cataplasms are to be renewed as often as they begin to get dry, in contradistinction to those cooling cataplasms, which are to be renewed as often as they begin to get warm. Of these cooling cataplasms, use is only made in very painful and inflammatory exanthems; no fear is to be entertained that

they might drive back the exanthem into the body by their coldness; this is indeed done by cold air, but never by cold water.—The use of the warming cataplasms besides, in the crisis, is a very extensive one in water-cures. For instance they are laid upon the stomach and belly in order to strengthen them, also upon the breast, and upon the region of the vesica, to remove spasms. To dwell here more circumstantially upon their further application would be foreign to the purpose of this book, suffice it to say that they are used as well to strengthen the parts as to extract injurious materials.

The principle can be applied to practice by every thinking reader in all cases without our enumerating individual instances. From this principle also the conclusion will follow, that these cataplasms will demand often a considerable time, perhaps even a year, in order fully to produce the desired effect.

The best of all rules respecting the crisis may be expressed as follows :

*Be not afraid of its coming, of the beginning of the desired and called-for moment, the critical*



*time, with its pains, its anxieties and threatenings. If you feel, after some trial of the cure, yourself in such a degree relieved that you might entertain the opinion that all had been done, and the cure was finished; then be prepared and ready for the decisive struggle. This struggle never comes before the organism has recovered considerable strength, and gained such a degree of power as to be able successfully to enter into the combat with the enemy.—If at the entering of the crisis you cowardly give up the cure and yourself, you are like the hunter, who has allured a tiger to relinquish his den, and then runs away frightened at the sight of the monster. The hunter will be torn in pieces, and your fate will be no better, if you crown your folly and cowardice by seeking help from a medicine-physician. The same medicine, which at another time would have caused to you only a moderate and usual poisoning, will now kill you in the water-cure!—When all nerves are performing a crying and dissonant music, like a band of artists preparing their instruments for an exhibition, then rejoice,—thy body is tuning the*

*instruments in order to play to thy delight the enchanting hymn of perfectly restored health! When the painful strokes of the crisis are most hurtful to thy feelings, then you ought to triumph! These strokes are announcing, like sounds of trumpets, the return of health!*

§ 8.

*Advices for persons who wish to make use of the water-cure.*

Whoever intends resorting to the water-cure only for the strengthening of a weak organism or a single weak organ will find remarks adapted to his circumstances in the following chapter. But he, who is really troubled with disease, whether caused by allopathic medical stuffs, or arthritic, hæmorrhoidal, sharp and corrupt fluids, &c., will act most wisely by applying to the springs of an already established institute for healing by water, for a physician who has acquired his knowledge by the personal instruction of Priessnitz alone can be depended upon against the dangers of the crises. But must the patient indeed devote as much time to his cure,

as may be found necessary?—whoever must or will achieve his cure in the space of a certain fixed term, may as well stay at home. Those who are not possessed of the means required for a cure in such an institute, or whose want of time will not permit this, had best look out for one who knows this practice by his own experience, from whom he may carefully learn every thing necessary to know, principally about the mechanical apparatus and its adhibition, peculiarly informing himself, by correct and minute instruction, of all that relates to the time of the crisis.—But a water-physician and critical judge of the whole process is not one who knows merely that cold bathing and drinking is wholesome; but one who has studied with Priessnitz himself, for Priessnitz alone is the true protecting angel of men; he alone has looked through the whole system of his discovery; and he alone is able to give a competent instruction about all the constituent parts of his great, wholesome invention, by which the whole human family is benefitted.

The most favourable seasons for calling forth

the crises are the spring and the fall. During these seasons nature herself drives to the crisis. They are the true periods for healing, turned by physicians into periods of destruction. In these epochs, every constitution possessing vital power exerts itself for the purpose of casting out all inward-dwelling materials inimical to health. If diet and treatment are perverse, these efforts may indeed easily be made to lead to death, or to chronic deteriorations of the whole system; but under the hands of hydriatric practice they guide the more rapidly to recovery.

The majority of men are accustomed to call these periods the unhealthy ones, because they are accustomed to illusions arising from a superficial view of things—their minds not possessing a sufficient penetration into the interior of things.

### § 9.

*Of the spreading of hydriatric practice, and its prospects.*

Eastward from this country, throughout most parts of Europe, this new doctrine has spread with rapidity; even in slowly-judging, hesitating

Germany one new institute for healing by water rises suddenly after another, and the public shows the warmest interest in the beneficial discoveries of the great Priessnitz. In America, this acknowledgment cannot yet be expected. The author of this treatise is the first who steps forth to announce to the inhabitants of happy and free America the blessings which are concealed in that elementary gift, which contains so many other blessings, and which is so indispensable to our existence and well-being. May this communication excite a nation so willing to investigate and adopt what is good, to a thorough examination of a subject of such importance! The author has himself been at Græfenberg, and his conviction of the excellency of this institute has been acquired by personal experience; for there he was cured of a wound received in his breast, which, after great sufferings for several years, had been declared by different physicians of great celebrity to be incurable. Death approached in rapid strides, but Priessnitz arrested his steps, and to him and his water-cure the author owes,

under the Almighty power, the preservation of his life.

The opposition, which is everywhere raised to water-cures, and will darken the prospects of that system also in America, originates not only with allopathic and homœopathic physicians, who are afraid of losing their daily bread by a method so calculated to annihilate their future practice entirely, but arises also and principally from the circumstance, that the water-cure of chronic diseases is so troublesome and tedious that only a few men possess the power of a firm resolution to such a degree as to go perfectly through with it. But whoever stops in the midst of the cure, has rather deteriorated the state of his health than mended it. Besides, for most men, a water-cure in chronic diseases is impossible, for even such as are possessed of the strongest power of will are often impeded by external circumstances. How could the poor day-labourer and mechanic find every day six or seven hours' time for the performance of this cure? And this is not all, for in the remaining hours the patient cannot work with his wonted power, the cure

weakening the body much, principally in the beginning. These obstacles might yet be overcome, if the cure could always be performed in a fortnight or four weeks, but it may as probably last for six months, or a year, and even longer.

This is the difficulty in chronic diseases. In acute maladies another obstacle makes its appearance, the water-cures assuming, in instances of this kind, such a forbidding exterior that it deters people from them in our present state of alienation from nature. To seek refuge in a cold bath during the glow of a burning fever, having reached its extremest heat, when life appears to be in utmost danger. How senseless, how horrible this sounds! Rather will the sufferer stick to chamomile-tea and Brandreth's pills, according to the advice of this or that old woman.

This is *one* obstacle; the *second* is, that water is such a very common, every-day, vulgar mean, to be found in every brook, and thrown away, after its use, into the street. The great mass of men are too stupid to conceive that exactly that

which is *most plentifully everywhere, and at every time at hand for the use of man, should be at the same time the most salubrious.* The whole earth is surrounded by *air, preserving the life*; and two-thirds of our terrestrial globe are covered with *water, administering to health.* Every thing of rare occurrence is either pernicious or of no use. Among plants, the rarest are those possessing poisonous qualities; among metals, gold; among stones, the diamond. But for these things the human race long most. They wage war among themselves for gold and diamonds; search and run distractedly after poisonous herbs; brew dark coloured nauseous beverages from them; and spend their very last cent to be poisoned by quacks, happy and delighted at the sight of the charlatan, particularly if he knows how to twist his features into mysterious forms and to utter incomprehensible words and sounds.

Homœopathy has still other means to procure customers. How little inconvenience attend her cures! How pleasing, even instead of annoying, to the tender invalid, whom the least exertion of his delicate body throws into trembling



anxiety. Homœopathy exhibits also something mysterious, by offering remedies in doses which require a devout implicit belief in their power, since reason is at a loss to comprehend their efficacy.

Still greater allurements and peculiar charms are exhibited by Allopathy, which may perhaps be destined to stand the test of time and last as long as sin, though her effects are worse than all diseases taken together.

Permit me here to notice an analogy between horrible things, — Allopathy and the original fountain of all misery, which will only be exhausted when the last man shall have ceased to exist, viz. *vice*.—*Allopathy and vice have alike their support in the weakness and disproportion of the powers of the human will to the human senses and affections, in the majority of our fellow beings. Allopathy and vice produce both pleasing sensations as their first effects,—but the more certainly will they be followed by the same consequences, viz. by chronic languor or by despair !*

The bad effects of Allopathy commonly make

their appearance so tardily that the physician gains time to persuade his patients and himself, that those sufferings, which have so long delayed their appearance, are quite new disorders, not having the least connexion with the medicines given. When such doctors have suppressed an acute struggle, and the old cause of disease re-appears in a new form, accompanied with fatal consequences, they say that the original disorder has been healed, and has been succeeded by a new one. But it is not a new one, it is only the old one in a new form, and on that account for this time victorious.—It is fatal, because, by the use of the former medical stuffs, the healing power of nature or of the organism has been suppressed.

That real physicians, that is, respectable professional men, — not those who have merely gained a smattering of scientific knowledge by a short stay at some university, for of such I do not speak—will but rarely assist in promoting the knowledge and practice of the hydropathic system, is natural enough. For it is a hard demand, that a man who has employed for many

years all the powers of his intellect and mind in cultivating the medical sciences should subsequently come to the conviction that he has spent the best years of his life in cracking empty nuts. And should he even arrive at this conclusion, he will find it still more hard to confess it, thus sacrificing himself and family at the altar of truth, and exposing himself and them on this account to starvation. To do this, requires a magnanimity of sentiment not common in our race. These are the views of Priessnitz himself, and he consequently wishes to prevent the visits of physicians to his institute, by declining them very politely.—But at the same time he is still more opposed to Homœopathy than to Allopathy, believing the latter to be hastening to her end; her sins being so palpable, he sees in her but a corpse. His views of both systems are derived from the history of his patients. Most of those who come to his institute are afflicted with chronic diseases, for which they are indebted to Allopathy; they generally afterwards look for help by homœopathic means, but in vain; and now their loudly expressed conviction

is: — “ *That Allopathy produces misery, and Homœopathy no lasting benefit!*”

Further, says Priessnitz, it is impossible that Allopathy can ever co-operate with the hydropathic system; whilst this has been already here and there impudently asserted and tried by Homœopathy. This excited the indignation of Priessnitz, who could not remain indifferent to the thought that Homœopathy might rob the water of its honour, and continue the old humbug and deception. Several followers of Hahnemann have already established, in Germany, institutes for curing by water, in order to unite the hydropathic system with the darling child Homœopathy. This caused Priessnitz indignantly to remark: “ *They will pretend that a decillionth part of their dynamic powders, smuggled by them into the cold water had done the business, thus arrogating the water-practice to themselves as homœopaths, and leaving the public in darkness and ignorance about the healing cause, a correct knowledge of which is so important to the suffering as well as to the thinking part of the human family.*”

This artifice has made Priessnitz averse to all doctors, whilst he willingly gives every explanation respecting his method of healing to all other visitors. He is entirely free from selfishness, and entertains the fervent wish that institutions like his own may soon be spread as widely as possible.

I will here mention some such establishments, founded previous to the year 1839 :

In Austria there are already several in operation, the minuter circumstances of which have not fallen under my notice. One is established near Vienna, and another at Neurode, in the county of Glatz. In Saxony there are two, one at Dresden, the other at Freyberg. Prussian-Silesia possesses one, near Breslau. In the north of Germany there is one in Elgerburg, one in Ilmenau, one in Berlin, one in Hamburg, and one on the river Rhine in Boppard, &c. Whether this great discovery has been fostered by the public and the governments in the southwestern part of Germany, I am not prepared to say, but the house of representatives of Bavaria, in their 7th session for 1837 voted the

annual sum of 4000 florins to be put at the disposal of the minister of the interior for the establishment of an institute of this kind.

The hydriatric method has even found ingress into the Russian empire, principally by the exertions of Dr. Harder, who studied with Priessnitz himself for nine months. In acknowledgment of the beneficial effects of his new establishment at St. Petersburg for curing by cold water, the Emperor of Russia has heaped distinctions and rewards upon Dr. Harder in the most liberal manner.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE BEST DIET—DIET IN DISORDERS OF THE  
STOMACH—DRESS—PASSIONS—BATHS.

NOTWITHSTANDING some apparently retrogressive motions and partial obscurations of the light of truth, the general tendency of the present generation is towards mental regeneration. But before this end can be reached, the process of renewing ought first to restore our bodily constitution to that freshness and vigour of which it is susceptible. Our external artificial coverings, so far as they are unwholesome, must be thrown away, and first we should gain a new skin by the use of cold baths.

In the former chapters we have considered how diseases may be cured; we shall *now proceed to reflexions concerning the prevention of diseases, by which our future days might be threatened.*

In the morning, when you awake from sleep, rise without delay from your bed, and refresh your skin, all over the body, in a bath full of cold water. Whoever is not furnished with this most valuable household article should cause water to be thrown upon him out of buckets, and thus to wash every part. This service can easily be rendered by and to every one. After the bath, take exercise, until the reaction of warmth begins to take place. When this comfortable feeling in the state of rest *is decreasing*, lay yourself down, under warm coverings, until the fullest reaction is obtained. After your promenade, a breakfast consisting of bread and butter, with unboiled cold milk with its cream, and as fresh as possible, will be the best.

Here may be made a remark about the *coolness* of victuals and drinks: The use of all warm nutriment weakens the stomach, what is taken cold refreshes and strengthens it. To a stomach enfeebled by warm nourishment, the transit from this to cold food is at first disagreeable and troublesome; but it soon becomes used to it, and gains strength in an astonishing degree.



The cause of the cold food's strengthening the stomach is the same as with the skin. Any thing warm coming in contact with the skin, or the stomach, has the effect of heightening the temperature ; consequently the reaction, striving constantly to produce the opposite effect, causes the depression of the temperature and a loss of activity. The reverse takes place by the influence of cold substances ; their coldness confers, besides the beneficial warmth of the reaction and the increased activity of the stomach and skin, the benefit of the contraction of the fibres. The experiences collected at Græfenberg have completely proved the benefit of cold or very much cooled food. Persons who had suffered in a high degree by the weakness of their digestive organs were restored by cold diet continued for some months.

*A substitute for milk.* The general opinion is, that milk causes slime ; but this can be admitted only as following the use of boiled milk.

Whoever is accustomed to the use of unboiled milk, will testify to its beneficial influence upon the stomach ; besides this, it contains the most

adequate of nourishing substances, and is, as a remedy against sharp fluids as well as earlier and later medical poisoning, of a most excellent efficacy. But any one who cannot overcome his aversion to cold milk, may either drink cold water only to his bread and butter, or substitute for the cold milk, cold roasted meat, or take whatever he likes best, provided it has not undergone any fermentation, and comes not from a foreign zone — therefore no coffee. Every thing coming from another zone than that in which we live may be looked on with suspicion.

“ALL PRODUCTS OF A ZONE ARE ONLY WHOLESOME IN THEIR NATIVE ZONE !” This remark I found true, by my own observations, while travelling. Priessnitz, without stirring from home, by his genius discovered it on his own mountains.

In the highest northern zone fat is produced abundantly, but nothing hot ; therefore, if you live in Labrador make a plentiful use of fat, in order to overcome the effects of cold. But beware of spices, they will kill you by inflammation. In the southern regions the animal kingdom is deficient in fat, but the vegetable kingdom brings

forth hot spices plentifully. If, therefore, when residing on the Moluccas, you do not live on meagre diet, and well spiced, you will surely die the victim of disease, the seat of which will be the belly. It is absolutely impossible to controvert these lessons of experience, from which the conclusion follows naturally, that the products of foreign zones are to be avoided if we wish to promote our health by our diet. Give up, therefore, your coffee and tea, till you go to Arabia and China. Then you may sip them to your heart's desire — there they will do you good.

The noxious consequences of fermented and intoxicating beverages are disputed by nobody. And yet the saying has become proverbial:—*“They will, when used moderately, do no harm.”* But this is an error; *they do harm in a moderate degree, when used in a moderate degree.* Let wine therefore not become to you an article daily wanted; and if you make use of it at rare occasions, fail not to drink between those few and small potations a good deal of water. Better leave wine entirely alone.—The same may be said of beer. The more either may be suspected

of being adulterated, the more they ought to be avoided. — Even if intoxicating drinks were not hurtful to health in themselves, their daily use would certainly become dangerous, on account of their being frequently mixed with obnoxious or poisonous ingredients.

For dinner I recommend a hearty meal of domestic fare, with the exclusion of all smoked and salted meat and fishes. Pickled and salted articles of food are to be avoided, for more than one reason. They introduce so many sharp particles into the body, that even a healthful organism has enough to do to remove them out again; — far less can any reasonable hope be entertained that an organism already harbouring noxious matter or corrupted fluids should overcome, mend, or entirely eject them. Besides, oversalted meals are hurtful to the body, and occupy the same place with the so-called bitter, roborant, stomachic means, of which more below. Thirdly, salt meat has but little nourishing substance, as any chemist can plainly show. The nutritious parts of the meat consist in the juice

not in the fibre; and this juice is taken out and absorbed by the lye in which the meat was deposited. The public, indeed, in general entertains different views from these, respecting salt-meat, conceiving it to be nourishing on account of its remaining tenaciously in the stomach,—not considering that it possesses this quality only by its being very indigestible. Finally, this food is also of a bad odour and taste.

Leave then salt-meat to mariners and sailors. They have nothing else, and can best manage it, since their whole way of living—the sea-air, the daily involuntary sea-baths—the constant motion,—turns them into a kind of sharks.

Meat must be so roasted that it retain in the interior the reddish colour of the fleshy juice. In this state only it is savoury, easily digested, easily masticated, and very nourishing. But if, in the old German way, the meat is exposed for hours to the fire, the reddish juice will evaporate, and be consumed by the air. If the meat is first boiled out into a soup, it is fit for dog's stomachs, not for those of men, is a British proverb and a true one.

The meat of such a roasted piece must, of course, come from a young animal. If such a one is not to be had, vegetables alone, dishes made of flour, &c. are preferable to roasted meat of old cattle.—It is always reprehensible, when meat destined for being roasted is first boiled out in soup.

Priessnitz excludes no kind of animal from the table of his patients, he permits even those who are labouring under difficulty of digestion the use of the meat of hogs, ducks, and geese, though the famous *Rumohr* says, in his *Spirit of Cookery*.—"Not wishing to tax a man of cultivated taste too heavily, it may yet be expected that he will abstain from eating pork."

I have seen on the Græfenberg the following bill of fare :

1. Bouillon of beef, with small liver-dumplings,
2. Tried beef, with onions,
3. Roasted pork with sour-kROUT,
4. Tyrolese apple-dumplings.

The inmates of the institute, not even excepting those who were formerly used to the most exquisite dainties, enjoy with a greedy appetite

this homely fare ; and stranger still, people who formerly could scarcely digest the most delicate and refined dishes display here the hunger of wolves, and feel well and strong.

Priessnitz warns all who have feeble digestion against every kind of soup. These dishes are indeed detrimental rather than beneficial. Soup makes too little impression upon the relaxed fibres of the stomach to have the power of exciting their activity. But warm soups especially have a very debilitating influence on the stomach. Besides this effect, every kind of soup is unwholesome, because it occupies the place which ought to be filled by water. Cold water is the first of all means for promoting digestion, because it best aids the stomach in extracting the nourishing substances from the aliments ; and produces, by the often-mentioned re-action, the necessary and lastingly heightened warmth of the stomach. But soup, on the contrary, not only does not decompose the aliments but needs itself to be dissolved in its constituent ingredients, and this is too great a demand from the gastric juice. But perhaps some old ladies

may anxiously recommend and praise their little soups as excellent nourishment for patients of all kinds, having, as they will probably allege, stood the test of centuries. To this we respectfully object, that for centuries, likewise, witches have been persecuted and burned, though they never existed at all. Nonsense and abuses will never cease to be such, though for millions of years they are believed to be the rules and practices of wisdom itself.

If the instinct of man be taken into consideration: All those suffering under acute diseases are longing for cold water! All persons labouring under weakness of the stomach feel an aversion to soup!

In place of our long-lasting dinners, permit me to propose the following regulations:

1. *No soup*—and only one dish—the stomach being better enabled to digest a given quantity, if it is of a simple nature, than if the same is composed of various ingredients; and because, for those of a weak stomach, the temptation to eat too much is considerably heightened by the variety of the dishes.



2. This single dish might consist of well roasted meat, not too fat, and a young animal, best of venison, beef, fowls, mutton, calves, &c. The roasted meat may be accompanied with apple-sauce, rice, potatoes, salad, or something else not of a bad smell; for instance, cabbage. For the truth of the rule is established.—*Whatever smells badly is not easily digested, and not wholesome.*” Has nature given the noble sense of smelling in vain?

3. After this only dish, nothing but good bread and butter, and sweet unboiled milk; or in summer-time, coagulated sour milk with all its cream, or fresh fruits.

In the evening, bread, butter and milk are excellent, and if you eat them two or three hours before going to bed, you may add some cold roasted meat, or some fish or pudding.

By adding to the above :—Drink nothing but milk and water; get used to much drinking; indulge in bodily exercise; avoid much sitting; rather be on your feet or in a lying position—we can conclude the rules of the daily diet.

Perhaps some gastronomers will smile at these doctrines and precepts, for the simplicity of these regulations for the table will not suit their taste. But let them smile; a child can put to shame their neglected intellectual faculties; and bitter repentance will soon enough come over them, when their sarcastic sneer will turn into a painful acknowledgment of their error. Return to nature; she alone is the true guide to comfort and health, she alone prepares a sure road to a serene old age and painless death.

Whoever wishes to receive the master's degree of enjoyment must first learn and then never forget: "*That the height of enjoyment depends upon the susceptibility for it, not from the object to be enjoyed.*" The diet I have now described sharpens the senses to an extraordinary degree; it cements and strengthens the body; but in order to possess the gift of a truly sensitive, expanded, and variegated enjoyment, the senses must be developed to an uncommon degree, and the organism must possess its full health and strength.

The above-proposed diet gives to the organs

of smell and taste such an acuteness, that the instinct, which by the common way of living is entirely dormant, reawakens, and can serve as an infallible physician. Whoever in the nicé distinctiveness of taste has come back to the true instinct, can confidently follow his inclination in every disease. That part of instinct, which tends to the mere preservation of animal life, dwells in the smell and taste. This instinct has been engrafted into men and animals in the like degree of acuteness and infallibility. The nose of a human child of nature, not yet spoiled by what is called refinement and custom, indicates to him any poisonous herb, still more so the taste. The use of things warm deadens sufficiently the instinct of the nose, but more so the fumes of the narcotic foliage of the tobacco-plant.—In like manner the susceptibility of the nose of the dog becomes obtused by hot victuals, a thing well known to any hunter.

In opposition to this remark, the self-conceited wisdom of the short-sighted will object: “To the brute is given instinct, to man intellect!” But the brute possesses also some intellectual power;

it conceives and concludes ; yea, the nobler animal has even the gift of imagination ; thus we know that the dog dreams.

It must indeed surprise us, that, whilst the plainest diet furnishes the highest sensual enjoyment, it can be possible that man could deviate from the diet of nature to that of refinement. This, however, is both possible and comprehensible, "*for the short transit from the natural to the non-natural affords more pleasurable excitements than nature offers.*" This is a great truth, well deserving of being noticed.

The surplus of enjoyment lying only in the motion of the transit, it forces the deviated subject continually deeper downwards, until his senses and the susceptibility of enjoyment have become so dull and obtuse that nothing but pepper of Cayenne and aquafortis can excite them any more.

This is exactly the case with *virtue* and *vice*.—As the transit from nature to anti-nature produces the highest transport of sensual pleasure, so, on the contrary, the return from the non-natural to nature produces the bitterest sufferings

and privations ; therefore a very strong energy of the will is required for this return. But soon—very soon—the struggle is over ; and its reward is the gaining of true happiness.

In the healing institutes by water, existing in Germany, gastronomers of the most refined kind have been brought to the confession, that their morning-wines, with the most delicate morsels, never tasted so well to their palates as milk and bread does now. Lastly, it may be added, that the regeneration of the pure, nicely, and correctly discriminating taste, takes place much earlier than is commonly believed.—What can you say to that, you who indulge in those unnatural refinements ? The truly refined taste finds in milk more attractive charms than the uncultivated palate in the finest and strongest spirits.

#### DIET IN DISORDERS OF THE STOMACH.

In the United States—principally where the descendants of the old German settlers are living—eating a good deal, mostly indiscriminately,

besides the plentiful use of the customary beverages, is considered the greatest enjoyment of human life. Dyspeptic complaints are consequently of everyday occurrence, and may be noticed in this chapter treating of diet.

The first and most valuable mean for strengthening and purifying the stomach is cold water. For the latter purpose, when it is intended to solve old slime, and to effect vomiting or purging, it must be drunk perseveringly and in great quantities.

The allopathic roborant means for the stomach, the bitter and tonic ones, are the sworn enemies of the stomach.

This error of the doctors originated thus: Bitter and sharp substances, not being easily digested, excite a great activity in the stomach, in some degree nearly an acute struggle for the overcoming and removal of its deadliest enemy. This struggle occasions a more energetic digestion of its remaining contents, or in case of its being empty, it shows a strong desire for aliments, as a means of protection and defence against this enemy. From this it appears, that such

an increased digestion and appetite cannot be said to originate from good health, but rather from force and necessity.

Should the objection be raised here, that such activity must have an antagonist, in order not to fall asleep, and that therefore bitter tonics were salubrious; the answer will be: *Firstly*, The enemy must be such a one as can be overcome, which in this case is impossible, because these bitter substances are absolutely indigestible; but an antagonist, whose power is superior to that of his opponent will destroy *the latter*. *Secondly*, There is certainly no need for artificially creating labour for the stomach, since it is sufficiently engaged by its natural operations.

If this kind of so-called roborants are used daily, the stomach must, from day to day, sink more deeply into helpless misery. From this comes a new danger. In order to remove indigestible objects, and to secure itself against the pains caused by them, the stomach seeks refuge in the slime by which it is surrounded. Should this process be daily renewed, the powers of the stomach would be incompetent to counter-

act sufficiently; this organ prepares indeed the slime, but cannot purify itself from it. The slime overspreads the alimentary canal, and causes unnatural symptoms and productions. The patient feels now a constant pressure in the disordered stomach, and returning nausea. The doctor orders means for purging and vomiting, the latter remove nothing, the former only the same slimy fluid, which each purgative medicine will bring forth anew. The doctor then declares the stomach to be cleansed, but weak and in need of being strengthened. This is accordingly done in the former manner, and sickening stuffs are heaped upon each other in the system. Similar bad effects are produced from similar causes, viz. : from foetid, sharp, and acid agents; they excite an increased activity, because they torment the stomach, but they remain in themselves indigestible. Even kitchen-salt, too abundantly used, belongs to this class. Let the victuals be salted, but quite moderately, if you desire to be free from sharp fluids and a weak stomach.

Whoever has made use of many of the so-called roborant stuffs of the doctors, or other



medicines producing similar effects, may be firmly convinced, when the symptoms of pressure in the stomach and of returning nausea occur, that his disorder consists not only in weakness of the stomach, but in an accumulation of the toughest slime ; he ought not to be deceived, by the inefficacy of purging medicines, as indicative of returning health, an illusion which has already been illustrated.

If patients of this kind are not yet too old and feeble, they will, to a certainty, be restored by a water-cure, provided they will persevere in it ; and they will be amazed at the immense quantity of slime which will be removed from them. But the quantity of water to be drunk by them, for this purpose, must likewise be an excessive one. The stomach will soon get used to it. With these copious draughts of cold water, a daily cold bath must necessarily be combined, in order to avoid a pernicious preponderance of the internal activity over the external one ; daily clysters of cold water, and sitting-baths, are absolutely indispensable.

The cure of an already inveterate accumula-

tion of slime will indeed last a long time. Months may elapse before the first solution of the slime will make its appearance, and the period of the purification, accompanied by nausea, with violent convulsive efforts of the stomach for relief, vomiting, and purging may last again for weeks. Should a patient try to shorten this epoch by medical laxatives, he would destroy the effects of the cure, and recall the old misery.

In order to ascertain what is needful in the case of a disordered stomach, the better instruction may be received, not from extremely learned doctors, but from quite unlearned dogs, enjoying neither titles nor exacting fees.—The dog will drink plenty of water when his stomach is disordered, until vomiting or purging takes place, and then *he will feel well again*.

Here, in speaking of disordered stomachs, I must warn against an error, which may be very pernicious in its consequences. Some persons entertain the opinion that, to assist a weak stomach, the most nutritious substances ought to be given in a more concentrated form, as in the strongest bouillon, the yolk of raw eggs, &c.—

This is the surest road to ruin!—Depriving an organ of the activity which nature has destined it, is condemning it to the loss of all its energy.

## DRESS.

Never wear woollen cloths next the skin, since they constantly excite the skin to sweating, by which the body is weakened. Sweat is only desirable when a bath is to follow it. In the first week, even weak and old persons on the Græfenberg have cast off their woollen underdresses.

It is well to get used to a light and commodious dress, yet without forcing yourself to it. If your skin inclines to shudder; if it be deficient in that comfortable warmth accompanying perfect health, you may take this symptom as a proof that you harbour in your interior hurtful materials; and that your central functions possess an energy over-balancing the peripheral ones. A cold water-cure, with cold sweating-baths, is then needful to you, and you will be cured by exanthems.

## PASSIONS.

During a real cure, avoid every excitement. Priessnitz forbids therefore playing for money, and warns every patient against too lively an exertion of their imagination, as well as the enjoyment of sensual love. He admonishes them to guard against anger, peevishness, envy, and whatever may be numbered among the lower passions or excited animal sensations.

Even persons who are suffering only local inconveniences, and otherwise enjoying a blooming health, have to abstain from sensual love while the cure is in progress. If this may be considered as but half an existence, the necessity of the restriction will be found in the requisites of the cure.

But the diet of a healthy person is very different. With such, love, much love, but pure and chaste—pervading the regions of the soul, the heart, the imagination, the senses, the whole body—is requisite, for where nature herself furnishes the predilection, she also provides the means for its indulgence.

In the diet of health and virtue, the first of all precepts is, therefore: "*Get married as soon as nature calls decidedly for the married state.*"

## BATHS.

Long before I had heard of Priessnitz and his followers, I was convinced of the necessity of daily cold baths for the preservation of health. Observations made on animals, and reflexions upon the excellent bodily constitution of such uncultivated tribes as had not ceased to follow the precepts of nature, had made an indelible impression on my mind. But how different is uncivilized life from pure and unadulterated nature! Every animal is daily bathing in dew, or rain, or snow, or in river, or sea! Nature has ordered it so.

Further, cold water comes mostly in contact with the feet and lower parts of the body of those exposed to a natural life; this leads to the conclusion that those parts, feet and legs, should peculiarly be benefitted by the influence of cold water!—The power of cold water in promoting

circulation, transpiration, and warmth, gloriously confirms, principally by the experiments of Priessnitz, the truth of the old proverb:—*Keep your feet warm, your head cold!*—This golden rule is everywhere known; but how to execute it has been the subject of dispute and misunderstanding. Yet in the method of curing by cold water this precept has found its clear, plain, and easy exponent by bathing the head less frequently, but the feet oftener than any other part of the body.

From what has now been said, we may easily perceive the reason why, with most people, sharp substances come out of the skin in small vesicles and little pustules in the face. It is because most men are so slovenly as only to bathe or wash the face daily instead of the whole body. Ladies who wish to preserve their beauty, ought to take daily a general bath, and besides this a foot bath, the consequence would infallibly be, that those eruptions on the skin of the face would make their appearance on the lower parts of the body.

The best and most harmless of all cosmetic

means is likewise pure cold water. It imparts to the skin the rosy hue of health, purity, and a certain transparency and brilliancy. A delicate transpiration likewise follows the use of these baths, imperceptible to those whose sense of smell is not acute, but possessing the sweet odour of milk, whilst every offensive smell disappears.

The months of July and August, selected for a bathing-season, is no judicious choice, the water being then too warm. The best season is in the months of March, April, and May, if a water-cure is intended; or in the fall, during the months of September, October, and November. But then each general bath must not last over five minutes, for most patients not over one minute. And always, the best moment for entering into the bath is, when the skin is sweating.

The general bath is to be taken in the morning, when the skin is warm or sweating from the bed. The bath must then be prepared within a few steps from the bed. For the evening, when a sitting or foot-bath may be taken, I advise an ambulating half-bath, in which

one stands and walks with half the body in the water, during the space of from five to ten minutes. The upper part of the body must then be covered, so that neither chill nor sweat can take place. Such a bath would serve especially to remove congestions from the head and breast. But its first effect would be a contrary one, and therefore it would be necessary that persons suffering much by them should, on entering the bath, moisten the breast and head with water. These baths would, according to the views previously submitted, peculiarly increase activity and warmth, and assist in leading off the bad matter and critical ulcers from the interior parts to the legs. They would also benefit those whose hips and legs had suffered by weakness.

In local baths, the frequently expressed views ought to be well considered, and none adopted without joining with it a daily general bath. Under this condition, to people of sedentary habits, suffering by obstructions and piles, a daily cold clyster is of uncalculable value. Priessnitz has restored a great number of such sufferers to health. All those who went away



cured from the *Græfenberg* took with them their syringes, in memory of their way of getting healed. It needs scarcely to be repeated, that here also only cold water was applied, which, indeed, in the first application produces little effect, but proves more and truly beneficial as its use is continued.

When the above described air and water diet are observed, there can remain but two kinds of diseases, to which any truly *healthy* man (and such may any one become by observing it) can be exposed; *firstly*, the diseases resulting from climate (produced by corruptions of the elements); *secondly*, the infecting ulcerous diseases (such as the small pox, &c.)—All other acute diseases are only possible with *the* usual perverse diet; and all chronical ones must disappear, being only secondary consequences of perversely treated acute diseases.

## CHAPTER VII.

## RECAPITULATION,

*For such readers as read only the first and last pages of a new book, yet with the view of giving their judgment upon it.*

THE causes of the diseases of our body are always corporeal substances (never dynamical disproportions), from which the organism infected by them cannot be freed, unless they are ejected from it; not by being kept in it, even though arrested by chemical means, or neutralized.

For this reason no medicine can heal. It is impossible that the medicine could chemically destroy the sickening stuffs, because it is impossible to make the medicine pervade the whole organism in such a manner as to reach all the concealed particles of the disease; before this could be done, the diseased organism would be

entirely annihilated. It is also, for another reason, impossible, because the medicine undergoes decomposition in the stomach, in consequence of which a great deal of it is deducted by the bowels.

The *healing method of nature* consists, therefore, in the exercise of the power given to every organism, to *eject out of it all materials inimical to it*.

Any *artificial method* must therefore follow the same system, and consequently perform two duties. *Firstly*, It must help the organism, when the process of excretion is *heightened to an extraordinary struggle* (acute disease): and, *secondly*, It must spur it (in the crisis) to this struggle, when it becomes tired, and *resigned into languor* (chronical disease), and even then it must assist it in the renewed struggle, as a preserver.

*Homœopathy* appears to feel this, without knowing it. Its consistently elaborated principle, "*Similia similibus curare*," appears to encourage an excitement to the acute disease, but offers no support to the organism when the

struggle has begun. Homœopathy has also attained the knowledge that the doctrine of *neutralizing* the sickening substances by medicine belongs to the circle of absurdities and senseless inventions. And for this reason, probably, Homœopathy gives such ridiculously small doses, but which, being too small even for excitement, must be totally inefficacious. The success of homœopathic cures must be attributed solely to the healing power of nature, which will only fully display itself when entirely freed from all allopathic abuse. Allopathy has no consistency in herself; now making use of allopathically operating medicines, then of homœopathic specific means, as mercury in syphilis, Peruvian bark in alternating fevers, and again of surgical measures. But in most cases this school acts according to its name, and then the effect of its treatment is to remove the extraordinary struggle for the recovery of health, by weakening the organism; and thus to change the acute disease into chronic debility or chronic languor.

Allopathy has no supreme leading principle, no consistent system. The true method of curing,

that of nature, has a supreme principle, and is consistent. In the hydriatric system, though the iron consistency of nature is mollified and represented as beautiful and sublime in the harmony of the functions of the organism, and their actions and re-actions, yet nature is its prototype; and its rule is to *conceal the artificial character of the method, by which the simplicity of nature and her operations are disfigured, and her dignity as the supreme model of the art destroyed.*

The hydriatric method fulfills every duty of the healing art. *It stimulates the organism to work its own recovery*—a process only desired by Homœopathy. *It assists the organism in its struggle to heal*,—in which Homœopathy is entirely inefficacious.

In all internal diseases, the interior activity of the body prevails over the external, therefore it is the first and most pressing duty of the healing art to guide the activity of the organism, in conducting the motion of the fluids and sickening materials towards the external teguments of the body. This can be done exclusively by cold water, through its coldness and its solving quality.

The strong re-action, by its instrumentality, is relaxed,—the thronging of all particles of the body towards the skin, and the power of decomposition, causes a partial expulsion of the noxious materials, already immediately under the skin, and an excitement of this tegument to great activity. The water strives to decompose and solve the whole skin into its constituent elements; this organ re-acts in defending itself, and is thus stimulated to an activity by which all the energy of the organism is solicited and the general aflux attracted to it. In and by this process new disturbing substances are daily led from the interior to the skin, and daily extracted by the water, and expelled by the activity of the skin in sweat and ulcers.

Thus the hydiatric method effects the cure of chronic diseases.

In acute maladies, the danger is easily and surely removed, and the heat extracted much more rapidly then by venesection. By the same operation the deleterious substances are conducted to the skin, and expelled from it by sweat and eruptions.

The same process gone through with the skin is applied to the stomach and the bowels, by copious draughts of water and by injections. Materials causing disease lying there or in the neighbouring regions, will be absorbed by the water, and rejected with it. This is the origin of the frequent diarrhœas and critical urinating during the water-cure.

An uninterrupted health until death quietly enters, in the last moment of a prolonged life, is quite impossible without the use of daily cold baths, because the skin must be open and active daily in order to eject the noxious substances that daily intrude. The organism of man, like that of every viviparous animal, is intended by nature for frequent contact with cold water. If, in any individual case, this is wanting, there will be, without exception, a preponderance of the internal activities over the external ones, as a necessary consequence. This, in itself, is an abnormal state leading to disease, the equilibrium required for health being suspended.

## CONCLUSION.

What will be the fate of this little Book? Some will believe it—some will doubt it—some will laugh at it. With Paul, I ask nothing for it, but—*Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.*

Go, then, my darling production, into the world, teach and convert the followers of errors and pernicious customs, that they may return to virtue and to nature. Equally conscious of the excellence of my cause and my inability to do justice to it, for myself I covet but the commendation—“He has done what he could.” May the Supreme Power bless and protect this good cause, and I shall feel happy, though unnoticed and unknown, supported by the consciousness that I have not been altogether useless to my fellow-men and my adopted country.

THE END.

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